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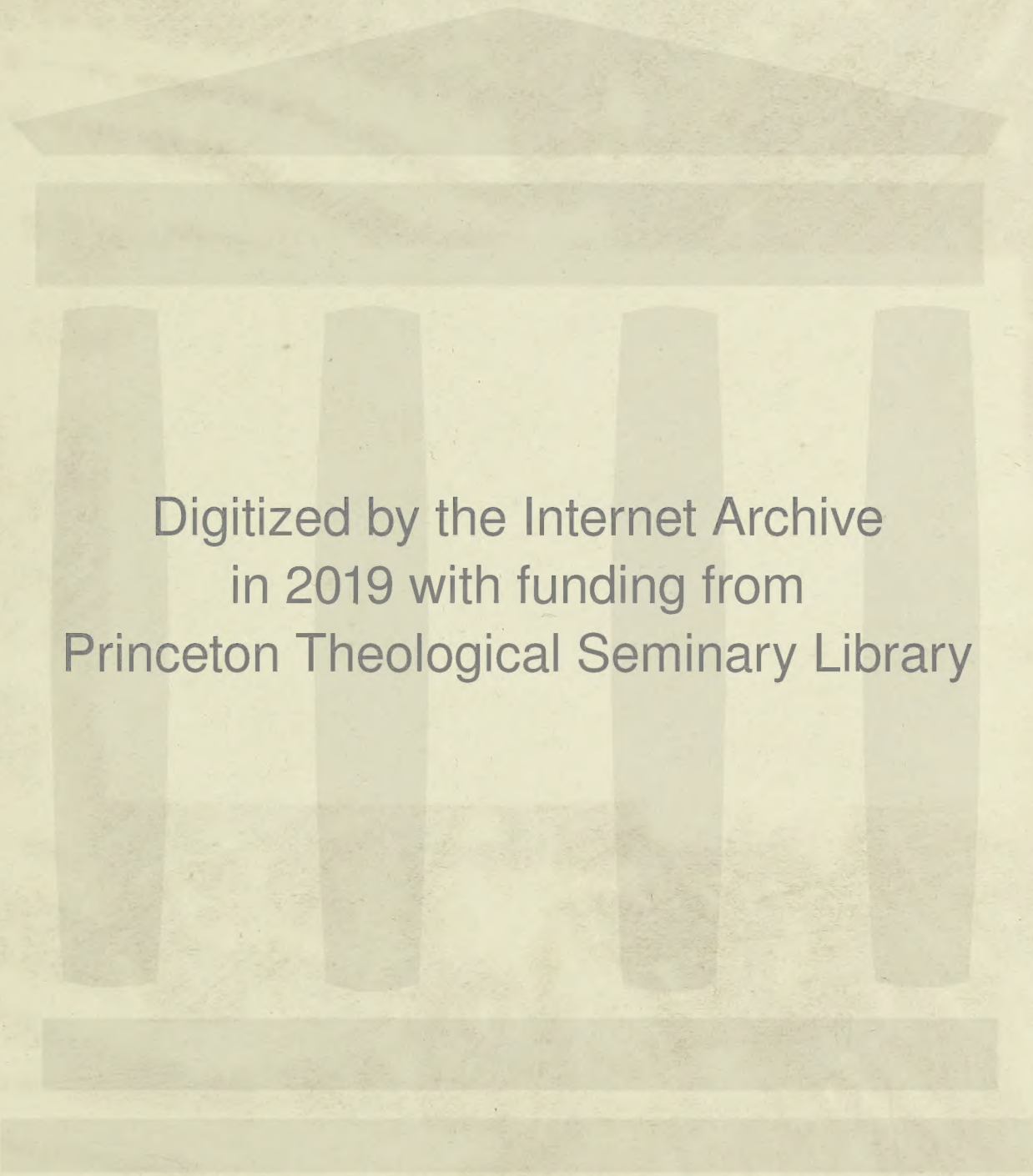
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FULFILLED PROPHECY  
A  
PROOF OF THE TRUTH  
OF  
REVEALED RELIGION:

BEING  
THE WARBURTONIAN LECTURES  
FOR 1854—1858.

WITH  
An Appendix of Notes,  
INCLUDING A FULL INVESTIGATION OF DANIEL'S PROPHECY  
OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

BY THE  
VERY REV. W. GOODE, D.D., F.S.A.,  
DEAN OF RIPON.

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"If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one  
rose from the dead."—LUKE xvi. 31.

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1863.



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## PREFACE.

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THE object of the Warburtonian Lectures, as described by their founder, Bishop Warburton, is,—  
“To prove the truth of Revealed Religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, from the completion of the prophecies in the Old and New Testament, which relate to the Christian Church, especially to the apostasy of Papal Rome.”\*

In the mode of treating the subject which the Author has adopted in the following Lectures, he has perhaps gone beyond the precise limits of that class of prophecies which Bishop Warburton has here pointed out. The prophecies of the Old Testament relating to certain ancient kingdoms and nations were not, perhaps, within the contemplation of Bishop Warburton, when he penned the words above quoted. But their testimony is of so much importance as a proof of the truth of the religion revealed in the Old Testament, and by necessary consequence of that contained in the New, that it is almost a necessary supplement to that which Bishop Warburton had more especially in view. Its addition, therefore,

\* See Hurd's Life of Warburton, in Warburton's Works, vol. i. p. 90.



even if it be considered as not within the precise scope of the Bishop's design, will probably be considered by the general reader as a pardonable amplification of it.

The postponement of the publication of the Lectures to the present time has arisen from causes of which it is unnecessary to trouble the Reader with any particular account. The Author's removal from London soon after their completion, taking him to a new sphere of labour, where other duties required his attention, and accompanied by circumstances which left him little opportunity for literary labours, the greater portion of his books being still in the cases in which they were removed, has been, in few words, the reason for the delay.

But, during that period, events have happened in the Church which seem to call for works on such subjects. The Author has therefore been induced to prepare the Lectures for the press, and add a few Notes confirmatory of the statements contained in them.

The work, as now issued, is not intended for the *student*, who desires to go into the *details* of the evidence existing for the fulfilment of the Scriptural prophecies here referred to; but *to give the ordinary reader a general view of the more striking points in that evidence*. What is most required by the great mass of readers is, that the leading points in the evidence should be clearly and forcibly brought before them, and neither their attention distracted nor their patience wearied by the minor details. This is all,



indeed, which it seems desirable to aim at in a course of Sermons. And though, under other circumstances, the Author might perhaps have felt inclined to give a larger amount of matter in the shape of Notes, yet, for the general reader, what has been given will probably be found to be sufficient.

With one exception, therefore, the Notes are limited to the leading points in the subject treated of. Nothing would have been easier than to have added largely to them. To several of the Sermons, indeed, a volume of Notes might have been appended, giving important details of the evidence adducible on the subject of them. This is especially the case with respect to that on the Church of Rome. But to enter into such details is not the object of the present work.

The exception is in the case of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. This the Author has endeavoured carefully to investigate, and he has attempted to draw out a full proof of the accurate and complete accomplishment of it in the time and circumstances of our Saviour's public appearance as the Messiah, and the events that accompanied it.

The study of fulfilled prophecy, as evidence of the Divine origin of the Scriptures, has recently acquired among us much additional importance. A school of divines has lately arisen in the Church of England, the offspring of German Neologians, who have endeavoured to depreciate and explain away the word of prophecy as affording no proof that the prophets were



enabled to foretell future events. The object of "Hebrew prophecy," we are told, is simply to be "a witness to the kingdom of God," in pointing out "those deep truths which lie at the heart of Christianity, and to trace the growth of such ideas, the belief in a righteous God, and the nearness of man to God, the power of prayer, and the victory of self-sacrificing patience, ever expanding in men's hearts, until the fulness of time came, and the ideal of the Divine thought was fulfilled in the Son of man." (Essays and Reviews : Williams's Essay, p. 70.) The whole volume of prophecy, abounding as it does with the most distinct revelations of the future, extending even to the minute details of the events it predicted, the fulfilment of which is a matter of historic record, is thus reduced to a mere announcement of moral truths. And the very notion of there being anything like foresight of events in the prophecies is ridiculed in such words as these :—"Why he [*i. e.* Baron Bunsen] should add to his moral and metaphysical basis of prophecy a notion of foresight by vision of particulars, or a kind of *clairvoyance*, though he admits it to be a natural gift consistent with fallibility, is not so easy to explain." (Ibid.)

So that the notion of any foresight of future events in the Prophets, such as a prescient Being could give them, is ridiculed as an absurdity.

Whether this arises from a disbelief in the *existence* of a prescient Being, or in the fact of his inspiring or holding communication with the prophets, is not



stated. As far as appears, the former is as likely as the latter. Indeed, as the prophets clearly profess to speak as inspired by God, and to foretell future events, the conclusion is inevitable, either that they were impostors, or that prescience is not an attribute of God. And as these writers do not seem to treat the prophets as impostors, the conclusion seems to follow, that they deny to God the attribute of prescience.

If, in fact, it is admitted, that there is a prescient Being who foreknows future events, who, in the language of the prophet, can “declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done,” (Is. xlv. 10,) it is difficult to understand, why so great an anxiety should be exhibited to prove, that he has never given to man indications of future events. It is obvious that such prophetic declarations may be made to answer an important purpose, not merely by their general effect upon the minds of men, but by the testimony they afford, on their fulfilment, to the character of him who delivered them as a messenger from God, and consequently to the authority of his instructions. And certainly the prophets profess to announce future events in the name of God. And St. Peter expressly says, that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets testified in them *beforehand* of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. (1 Pet. i. 11.) Nor does it make the smallest difference, that neither the prophets, nor any that lived before the fulfilment of these prophecies, understood the *precise* way in which they were to be



fulfilled. The question is, Did the announcements which the prophets were commissioned to deliver agree with the events that afterwards happened? This question must be answered in the affirmative.

If there is a prescient God who has revealed His will to man, why should He not have given prophetic intimations of future events even as evidences of His nature and character as God, if for no other purpose.

To ridicule the idea of predictive prophecy, then, goes far to prove the existence of erroneous notions of the nature of the Divine Being, tending to Pantheism or Materialism.

Setting aside the fact of the opposition of such a notion to the testimony of Scripture, it shows that, though Scripture may be called a revelation from God, the Divine Being himself is in fact denuded of his attributes.

And, as might be expected, the same ground is taken with respect to miracles as in the case of predictive prophecy. The supposition of any interference with the ordinary course of nature, by a special interposition of the God of Nature, is repudiated as inadmissible.

The position, therefore, which these writers have taken is, in this point as in others, altogether untenable. They must go either forward or backward. They must either proceed to a formal denial of the Divine prescience, and denude the Divine Being of one of his chief attributes, or they must give up their notion of the sanctity of the prophets and withdraw



their respect from them. To speak respectfully of the prophets, while at the same time they undermine their authority, deny them the power they claim, and more than stultify their words, can only be accounted for on some hypothesis damaging to their reputation for common sense or integrity.

And when they have thus disposed of the prophets, including Moses, the whole of Holy Scripture is so linked together, that the rest falls with them.

The middle course which some of these authors seem inclined to take, in representing the writers of the Holy Scriptures as having been very clever, worthy, and well meaning men, who, amidst much that is erroneous, have left us much that is very beautiful and true as to the character of God and the advantages of morality, and as men who ought to be ranked with the best authors whom the world has seen, is obviously untenable, and even ludicrous. Either they place before us communications coming to them directly and immediately from God, by the special inspiration of His Spirit, for delivery to man, including distinct notices of events that were to happen many years after they predicted them, or they were impostors. There is no intermediate view tenable.

The notion that underlies all the reasonings and imaginations of these authors is clearly this—that the world, and all things in it, have been made by some Supreme Power, who at their creation impressed upon them certain laws of being and action, in accordance



with which everything that takes place must necessarily happen. Thus, God is excluded from his own world. If His power is exerted in behalf of some of His creatures, who faithfully worship Him, in suspending the laws which ordinarily govern certain inanimate agents, every effort is used to explain away the fact, and prove the impossibility of such an interference. If, for the encouragement of His servants, or for the sake of giving mankind evidence that what professes to be a revelation from Him is really such, He enables certain individuals to foretell events that are to happen at a distant period, so that on their accomplishment the world may see the Divine origin of the revelation that contains them, the idea of foresight of future events in them, communicated to them by God, is ridiculed as an absurdity. In short, according to these authors, God has forsaken the world, and takes no further interest in His creatures. All things proceed according to certain innate laws and principles originally impressed upon them, and the exercises neither of Divine power or Divine benevolence are to be further expected upon this earth.

How far their notions really differ from Pantheism or Materialism, they will, perhaps, some day explain to us.

To the mind of the Author there is something inexpressibly painful in the consideration, that amidst all the manifestations and proofs which the Holy Scriptures afford us of the way in which the Divine perfections have been actively exercised in behalf of God's



servants since the beginning of the world, the Divine Being should be represented as if he had left the world and all things therein, including the being formed after His own image, to take their course without further interposition of His providence in their affairs.

That men having no regard for religion, or any love of God and his service, should endeavour to persuade themselves that such is the case, is not surprising. They would be glad to hide themselves from his presence, and that there should be no interference on his part with their course. But that any who profess to have a respect for the Scriptures, and a desire for God's presence and favour, should thus ignore all that God's *special* Providence, by direct interference with the ordinary course of nature, has done in times past for His servants, showing the active exercise of His attributes in their behalf, is a phænomenon for which it is difficult to account. It was the great glory of the Jewish nation, that they "had God *so nigh* unto them as the Lord their God was in all that they called upon Him for" (Deut. iv. 7); and it is the great privilege of all His servants to know, that He is "*nigh* unto all them that call upon Him." (Ps. cxlv. 18.) But if all things happen just as they would if he was *not* nigh unto them, it is difficult to see what the value of the privilege is.

Still more painful is it when such notions are propagated by those who bear office in the Church of Christ as His ambassadors to the world. And what-



ever may have been the case with foreign churches, never until recently could such a reproach be cast upon the Church of England. But alas ! we can no longer claim an immunity from it. Among those who minister in our Church are to be found men who are thus explaining away the statements and revelations of Holy Scripture, and making them but a fable and a delusion ; while others, including one holding even the Episcopal office, boldly deny the authority and credibility of a large portion of those Holy Scriptures from which alone we gather our knowledge of revealed religion, and which must all stand or fall together.

What may be the result of this time of trial to our Church, God only knows. How far those upon whom has rested the duty to see, that the law was maintained in such a condition as to reach such offenders, have discharged their obligations in this respect, time will show. In the mean while, the cause of Revealed Religion has received its severest blow in the house of its professed friends. And if the Church of England cannot purge herself of such a scandal, her fate is sealed and will not long be delayed.

God grant that it may not be said hereafter of the Church of England as it was of Tyre, “ *Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters.* ”

Whether the present critical position of the Church of England, when a portion of her very citadel is occupied by Romanizers and sceptics,—the representatives of superstition and infidelity, which always accompany one another,—is duly recognized, may well



be doubted. For there are few symptoms of any earnest efforts being about to be made to avert the perils with which it threatens us.

But it can hardly be supposed, that if even the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, on which the Church is founded, may be denied by her ministers, she can long maintain her position. Wide as may be the limits to the faith tolerated in the national Church, even in the case of her ministers, such a license as this would leave her without any ground upon which to rest her claims to the confidence or regard of the people.

Outward appearances of prosperity may, to a great extent, be long maintained. Pulpits and platforms all over the land may long utter the accustomed sounds, and dispense orthodox doctrine. But, if doctrines and practices such as those which are now, alas! rife in all parts of our Church, are allowed to maintain their ground, and take their place among us as consistent with the teaching and usages of the Church of England, such apparent prosperity will be but as the verdure on the branches of a tree of which a worm is at the root. But by this outward prosperity multitudes are deceived. And while the principles by the maintenance of which alone the Church can retain her hold on the respect of the people, or in fact keep her ground as a Christian Church, are trodden underfoot within her, and thus the very foundations on which she stands removed from beneath her feet, the number of faithful and pious individuals



in her communion is looked upon as indicating her stability as the National Church ; and to their increase *alone* attention is directed. But, however large may be the number of God's servants within her fold, something more is needed for her continuance in the position she has hitherto occupied in this country. If the Church is to become a Babel of discordant sounds as to the very foundations of the Christian faith, and the doctrines on which she rests as a Christian Church, her claims as a Church of Christ are gone. And it will be a serious consideration for those who are adding largely to her possessions and endowments, *what is the faith that is ultimately to predominate within her*, and whether her professed creed is to be merged in, or perhaps exchanged for, Romanism or Pantheism.

How the danger is to be met, is a question that I leave to the earnest and prayerful consideration of those whose age, learning, experience, and judgment qualify them to give an opinion in such a crisis. By no others, whatever may be the position in which circumstances have placed them in the Church, or the respectability or even popularity with which official duties may be discharged, is the course of events likely to be influenced, or the minds of the Public or the Clergy practically guided.

W. GOODE.

DEANERY, RIPON ;

*May* 21, 1863.



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## SERMON I.

*(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, February 5th, 1854.)*

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ISAIAH XLVI. 9, 10.

*“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”*

A PROOF of the truth of the Christian Religion cannot, I feel assured, be required by those who now hear me. Their presence here this day evinces the contrary. For the great object we have in view, when thus assembled, is to offer up our prayers and praises to God, in the name of Jesus Christ, as members of the Christian Church.

But it is not without its use, even to sincere Christians, to re-examine occasionally the grounds upon which our faith rests. We are exhorted by an apostle, to be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us. Our own faith also is thus strengthened and confirmed. We derive satisfaction and comfort,



amidst those trials to our faith by which we are surrounded, from a survey of the evidences God has graciously given us, for the truth of that revelation to which we are indebted for all our hopes of future happiness.

In this world there is, it must be admitted, much to test the stability of our faith. Judging from the dictates of unassisted reason, we might expect the present state of things to be very different from what we see it to be. The professed object of Christianity, it may be said, was to produce peace on earth and good will amongst men. In the figurative language of prophecy, the wolf was to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together. (Is. xi. 6.) It claims to be a religion which sanctifies the hearts of its disciples. It was so foreshadowed by prophecy as to lead the world to suppose that it would introduce a new era of righteousness and happiness, under the reign of one who was to be emphatically the King of righteousness, the Prince of peace, and all nations were to see the salvation of their God.

But none of these results have flowed from it. The world is still the scene of strife and contention. Peace is as much a stranger to it as ever. No golden age of universal love and benevolence has been introduced by the advent of Christ. Nay, more; the Church of Christ itself is torn with intestine divisions. Its members no longer hold even intercommunion among themselves. Its various portions excommunicate one another.

Moreover, among its professed members, we see the



same *practical corruptions* prevailing as disgraced their Pagan forefathers. And instead of there being any evidence of the promise of the coming of a mighty Deliverer having been fulfilled, or being likely to be fulfilled, "all things continue as they were from the creation of the world." And so far from the nations having been attracted by the light diffused by the Redeemer's advent, even those who bear the Christian *name* form but a small portion of the inhabitants of the world.

These are reflections which at times may pass through the minds of all.

True; when we come to take a *nearer* view of these difficulties, they will be found utterly destitute of foundation as objections to the truth of the Christian faith. The same Divine word that reveals to us the truths of Christianity, enables us at once to solve all such difficulties. The Divine Founder of Christianity himself forewarned his disciples, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matth. x. 34.) "Light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil:" and hence the introduction of an antagonistic principle of holiness stirs up hatred and strife. And though Christianity, when really received into the heart, has a purifying effect, yet not only do the imperfection and evil bias of our nature prevent, *in all cases*, the full *development of its power*, but many, our Lord tells us, will profess to be His disciples, whom He knows not, and will not recognize as such. (Matth. vii. 22, 23.)

Nor *was* the triumph of Christianity to be *immediate*.



On the contrary, Christianity was to be the object of much persecution. And the series of events that was to take place before its final victory clearly betokened a long period of previous conflict.

They who presume upon their Lord's delaying His coming, and raise any sceptical argument upon such a foundation, forget, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." They are *themselves* a proof of the truth of those declarations they deride, for they were long ago the subject of their predictions. (2 Pet. iii. 3—9.) There is an assigned period of existence, both to individuals, and to the earth on which they dwell; and though the sinner may do evil a hundred times with apparent impunity, and his days be prolonged, and the earth continue unchanged notwithstanding the wickedness of those that dwell therein, there is a day of doom to *both*, in which the decreed sentence will be executed, and in which it will be clearly seen, how irrational it is, that because sentence against an evil work is not executed *speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men should be fully set in them to do evil. (Eccl. viii. 11.)

But, beyond these considerations, we have, in the sure evidences on which the truth of Christianity rests, a firm ground on which all such difficulties may be met. And it is well at times for all to contemplate the foundation for their faith which the mercy of God has given us in these more direct testimonies.

The evidences for the truth of the Christian religion are of various kinds; and to estimate their united force, we must view them as a whole.

One of the most powerful is that of the *miracles*



wrought by our Lord and his disciples and their early followers. Their reality stands attested by the testimony even of his enemies, by whom they were not denied, but attributed to the possession of some potent spell, or even to Satanic agency.

Of the evidences by which we find the minds of its most able and learned *early* converts affected, one of the strongest was, the *character* of our Lord, and the *pure and singularly unearthly nature of the religion He taught*. The contrast between it and all the religious systems of the heathen world struck their minds in a way of which at the present day we can form but an inadequate conception. The true philosopher, in comparing them together, needed no further proof to convince him of the Divine origin of the Christian faith.

Nor must we omit to notice the evidence afforded by *the sufferings of its martyrs and confessors*. Standing alone, we might no doubt reckon this testimony insufficient as a proof of the Divine origin of the faith for which they suffered. But when we recollect the nature and extent of the persecutions to which the Church of Christ has been subjected, we can hardly fail to recognize, on many occasions, the interposition of a Divine hand for the support of its afflicted members.

Another still more conclusive testimony is afforded by *the success of the Gospel*, attained through instrumentality of the weakest kind, against all the enmity and persecution which the powers of earth could enlist against it, and notwithstanding its contrariety to all the inclinations and tendencies of the human heart.

But, among all such evidences, that of *prophecy*



claims perhaps the first place. Many of the evidences for Christianity have been *counterfeited* by the supporters of *false* religions and *superstition*. Thus, the *miracles* of Christianity have been imitated in the lying wonders of Paganism and various forms of superstition. The testimony derived from the constancy and zeal of *martyrs* has been mimicked by the heroism of the devotees of *idol* worship.

But the testimony of fulfilled prophecy belongs alone (so far as concerns anything worthy of the name) to the revelation contained in the Holy Scriptures. For the ambiguity and obscurity of the heathen oracles are fatal to their claim of a Divine origin. They are evidently nothing more than shrewd guesses into futurity, veiled in language capable of many different senses. And if some of them might seem to show knowledge of a superhuman kind, this would not be surprising, when we recollect that many of them are probably due to Satanic agency, and human intercourse with evil spirits. But there is a character of indefiniteness and imperfection stamped upon them all. The prophecies of *Scripture*, on the contrary, are definite and precise. They relate to events which no foresight of any created being could have anticipated. They extend into a remote future, distant many centuries from the period of their utterance.

The fulfilment of such prophecies gives evidence of the strongest kind in favour of the Divine origin of the religion with which they are connected. However much the proofs derived from *other* evidences may be *weakened* by supposed similar demonstrations in favour of other religious systems, the evidence of prophecy cannot be thus contested. Pre-



science of the future belongs to God alone. It arises out of those incommunicable attributes of the Godhead which can be shared by no created being. As the whole world of *nature*, so is the whole course of *time*, simultaneously present to His observation. He is Omnipresent in all *time* equally as in all *space*. In the sublime language of the inspired prophet, He “inhabits eternity.” (Isa. lvii. 15.) And by this attribute the Godhead stands pre-eminently distinguished from all created beings. His *power* may be in a measure communicated to them. His *loving-kindness* they may be permitted to copy. His *justice* they may be allowed to imitate. But His *eternal Omnipresence* is an attribute which admits of no degrees; for a *partial* omnipresence is a contradiction in terms. It belongs, therefore, to Him alone. And it is only where this attribute is found in all its plenitude, that the future can be equally visible with the present. He alone who possesses it can call those things which be *not*, as though they were.

Hence, in our text, the power of originating the word of prophecy is put forth as the irrefragable proof, that He who possesses it is the supreme, the only God:—“I am God,” saith Jehovah by the prophet, “and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.”

And, in the context, this is the challenge offered to the false gods who had usurped His worship,—“Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people; and the things that are coming and shall come, let them show unto them.” (Is. xliv. 7. See also Is. xli. 22, 23.)



The word of prophecy, therefore, can emanate only from a Divine Source ; and consequently, when events are predicted many centuries before the period fixed for their accomplishment,—especially where the predictions include many details, and many circumstances of an unlikely character,—if the events happen as predicted, we may certainly conclude, that the prophecy came from God, and, therefore, that the revelation with which it stands connected is of Divine origin.

This testimony to the Divine origin of the religion revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and of the Christian religion in particular, is the prescribed subject of these Lectures. And in what remains of this introductory discourse, I shall limit myself to a few general remarks on the three following points :—

I. The leading subjects of the ancient prophecies.

II. The vastness, and, at the same time, unity and harmony, of those prophecies.

III. The views and expectations with which our inquiries into this subject should be conducted.

And having premised these general observations, I purpose, in the remaining Discourses of the Series, to consider more particularly those prophecies of more special importance and striking character, upon which the *weight* of the evidence, derived from this source, chiefly rests.

Let us consider—

I. The leading subjects of the ancient prophecies.

The great subject of the word of prophecy is the person and work of Christ. “To Him give all the prophets witness.” From the earliest of the inspired



records, the writings of Moses, down to the last book of the Old Testament, the chief object of the prophetic word was, to describe the advent and character of the Saviour of mankind; the nature of His work, and the ultimate triumph of His kingdom over all opposition.

The prophetic intimations on these points contained in the books of Moses are, in the comparison, as might be expected, indistinct and obscure. But, as time advanced, the revelations made on the subject became more and more clear and definite, until at length the announcements of Isaiah and the other prophets, though preceding our Lord's advent by many centuries, gave a clear and even detailed account of the circumstances that were to attend and be the consequences of that event.

And no further evidence is needed, that these prophecies were not written after the event, for the purpose of establishing the claims of Jesus Christ, than the fact, that they have always been in the keeping of his great enemies the Jews.

Amongst the circumstances predicted of our Blessed Lord many centuries before his advent are these: that he should be born of a Virgin (Is. vii. 14), and that he should spring from the family of David when reduced to the lowest state (Is. ix. 6, 7, &c.); that he was to be born in Bethlehem (Mic. v. 2); that he was to come before the destruction of the second temple (Hag. ii. 6—9; Mal. iii. 1); that he was to appear at a certain particular period, precisely pointed out by Daniel (Dan. ix. 24—27); that his body was not to remain in the grave after death and see corruption (Ps.



xvi. 10); and that though he should pour out his soul unto death (Is. liii. 12), his kingdom should be an everlasting kingdom (Is. ix. 7, &c.); and the nations of the earth own him as their sovereign (Ps. ii. 8, lxxii. 11; Dan. vii. 14); that while he should be the "Desire of all nations" (Hag. ii. 7), he should yet be "despised and rejected of men, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Is. liii. 3); that he should bind up the broken-hearted, and proclaim liberty to the captives (Is. lxi. 1); and yet be brought as a lamb to the slaughter (Is. liii. 7); that he should be at the same time the Child born and the Son given, and yet the mighty God and the Prince of peace (Is. ix. 6); that he should be David's Lord, and yet David's Son (Ps. cxxxii. 11, cx. 1); that his soul should be made an offering for sin, and yet his days be prolonged. (Is. liii. 10.)

Thus, the word of prophecy was committed to predictions of the most distinct and definite kind respecting the person, character, and work of a great future Deliverer of mankind from the effects of the curse. And if we find, on a careful consideration of these predictions, that they were all exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, on what other hypothesis can we account for them, but that which supposes that they emanated from one who could "declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done."

This, therefore, is one and the most important of those classes of prophecies to which I shall have hereafter to direct your attention.

Another class of prophecies, which will call for



our consideration, consists of those that relate to events connected with the fate of various ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth.

Thus, for instance, in the case of the Jews, the promise given to Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars of heaven, and the sand of the sea-shore for multitude, and that his posterity should possess the land of Canaan, was given when he had no child, nor in the ordinary course of nature any expectation of one; and was given many centuries before there was any human probability of its fulfilment.

The destiny of the descendants of the several children of Jacob was foretold by the aged Patriarch, on his death-bed, with exact precision.

The predictions of Moses in the 28th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy as to the events that were to befall the Israelites under certain circumstances, are *at this day* receiving their fulfilment before our own eyes. The destruction of Jerusalem, and the circumstances attending it, are as exactly described by the Jewish prophets, and by our Lord, as by the historian who gives us an account of them after the event.

And the Jews have long been, as their prophet Hosea foretold of them, (Hos. ix. 17,) “wanderers among the nations;” though preserved, as no nation has been preserved, in a way that betokens some ulterior purpose yet to be accomplished in them; as other prophecies relating to their future state would lead us to expect.

More than a hundred similar instances might be adduced of prophecies relating to the history of the Jews.



Other prophecies of this kind relate to some of the great cities and empires of the world.

More than one hundred years before the fall of Nineveh, not only was its destruction foretold by Nahum, but the precise mode in which it was to be accomplished, when its inhabitants were in the midst of a drunken revel. And the prophet Zephaniah accurately describes its subsequent state as a place for flocks to lie down in, and the cormorant and the bittern to lodge in its desolate ruins.

In the case of Babylon, the capital of the world, the precise circumstances of its capture were predicted by Isaiah and Jeremiah, when it was in all its glory. The nations who were to combine against it; the drying up of its river; the capture by a surprise during the time of a feast, when its rulers and captains were in a state of careless security, indulging in all the excesses of a midnight carousal; the state also to which it was to be reduced, as the dwelling-place of wild beasts and owls;—all these things were foretold in the word of prophecy in express terms; when there was as little prospect of their fulfilment in the case of Babylon, as in that of the city in which I am now speaking.

Of Tyre, the famous merchant city of ancient times, we have, in the prophecies uttered during the zenith of its prosperity, a detailed account of the events that were to befall it, in its first destruction, its restoration, its final ruin, and its subsequent state as a barren rock, which should be used only for fishers to spread their nets upon.

Similar prophecies equally striking occur, having



reference to *other* cities and countries, many of whose remains to this day bear witness to the truth of the prophetic word in its announcements of their impending doom.

The third and last class of prophecies which I purpose to notice, consists of those that relate to the post-apostolic period of the Christian Church; which, though still in the course of fulfilment, have yet received a partial accomplishment which brings many of them within the subject assigned to these Lectures.

Of these, *many* were uttered by the Old Testament Prophets; but a more important portion, perhaps, is that which proceeded from our Lord and his apostles. On a future occasion, some of these prophecies will call for a more particular consideration. But at present my purpose is only briefly to point out the chief of them.

Let us observe, then, that the gradual progress of Christianity in the world, in the face of all opposition, the various persecutions with which the Church of Christ was to be afflicted, its successes and reverses, its joys and its trials, its approximation to extinction, and its final and lasting triumph, are all the subject of express prophecies uttered by our Lord and his Apostles.

More especially let us remark, as an instance to which, in these Lectures, we are particularly called by their founder to direct our attention, how clearly the apostasy of Papal Rome is pointed out both by St. Paul in his Epistles to the Thessalonians and to Timothy (2 Thess. ii., and 1 Tim. iv. 1—3, &c.), and by St. John in the Book of Revelation.



This rapid sketch of the more important prophecies contained in the Holy Scriptures may show us the *extent* of the subject to which our attention is directed, and naturally leads to the consideration of—

II. The vastness, and at the same time unity and harmony, of the ancient prophecies.

In the Holy Scriptures we have a series of prophecies extending through a period of more than 4000 years, and relating to a course of events commencing at the very beginning of the world's history, and terminating only at its close. Within its compass are brought all the most important facts in the history of the human race; so far as they set forth the character of the Divine Government, or affect the interests of God's worshippers. The point of time at which we stand enables us to see the fulfilment of but a portion of those prophecies. Many of them, especially those that relate to that kingdom which our Blessed Lord was to establish in the world, include the events of a long series of years in the midst of which we are living, and will afford warning, instruction, and comfort to all the successive generations of mankind till time shall be no more. This, evidently, was their great object; and therefore we must be careful to recollect that a perfect view of them will not be attainable, until that final consummation of all things, when they shall have reached their complete fulfilment.

And with all this *vastness* of extent, there is at the same time *unity* and *harmony* in all of them.

There is *unity of character* in them.

We see, in *all*, the evidences of *one*, and that one



the *Divine* mind. The same great principles of action (if I may so speak) are apparent throughout them all.

There is also *unity of object*. The final, though long delayed, punishment of sin, the ultimate, though long looked-for, triumph of God's servants, are seen in all. And if we inspect them more narrowly, we shall find, with but few, if any, exceptions, that the latter object is the great, though doubtless often indirect, subject of them all. All appear to have more or less reference to the interests of the true faith and worship, either in the punishment of its opponents or the support of its adherents.

Whatever particular portion of the prophetic word we may examine, we shall find (speaking generally) that the event of which it speaks forms but one link in a chain of events stretching throughout the whole period of time assigned to the duration of the earth as it now exists. And that chain of events is one in which every link more or less affects the interests of religion and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom. For though many circumstances apparently of a merely mundane character are thus noticed, yet they will all be found to have some connection with the history of God's worshippers, or the progress of His truth in the world. The greatest and most important events of a secular kind are noticed in their relation to this great object; and some which the historian of this world would consider of the highest moment, are almost, if not quite, left out of sight. If the acts of Nebuchadnezzar, or Sennacherib, or Cyrus, or Alexander are foretold in the Book of Prophecy, it is only because, and so far as, they affected the state



and circumstances of the servants of God. They were made the instruments of God's vengeance or mercy upon His professed worshippers, according as the conduct of His servants called for one or the other. And what might appear to some the most remarkable transactions, of a merely *mundane* kind, in which they were engaged, are scarcely, if at all, alluded to.

The gradual accomplishment of one great scheme of mercy, was evidently the great object in view in the mind of God; and they who spoke of future events, under His inspiration, foretold only what had some connexion with the work of human redemption. The rise and fall of empires were of little account with them, except so far as they stood connected with the interests of religion in the world.

True, indeed, the real meaning and purpose of the events of providence are quite beyond the grasp of our feeble intellect. We know not the reason for them. God's way is in the sea, and his path in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known. What events may happen only by his *permission*, and what by his *express direction*, human reason cannot fathom; and therefore we undertake not to give the *reason* for events, nor to trace their precise operation and effects beyond what is revealed. But we can see the evident marks of a Divine hand in the course of events, sufficient to show us *that* superintending agency by which all is directed.

Moreover, there is *unity* in these prophecies with respect to the *source* from which they *profess to be derived*. All were uttered by individuals between whom, as a body, there could be no mutual intercommunication; but all were worshippers of the same God,



and professed to derive their inspiration from the same source. And all these various prophecies are connected together and interwoven with each other. We must, therefore, receive the *whole* as a Divine revelation, or reject the *whole* as a human fabrication. And if we reject it, we must suppose, that a series of prophecies was uttered at various times, during a period of four thousand years, by men separated from each other by long intervals of time,—prophecies differing from one another in circumstantials, but relating mostly to the same events, and all accomplished in those events,—without any interposition of more than human intelligence.

Further, there is in all the prophecies of Holy Scripture *mutual accordance and harmony*.

Many and various as were the prophets of the Old Testament, and separated from one another by long periods of time, their testimony forms one harmonious whole. Put together, for instance, all the prophecies relating to the great future Deliverer whom the nations were led to expect by the ancient prophets, and you will find that, however much their statements may vary in their details, and differ from one another in points not self-contradictory,—showing their complete independence of one another,—and, whatever might be the interval between the periods at which their authors wrote, all form one harmonious whole—all, however *apparently* involving impossibilities or absurdities to one who *knew not what the Messiah was to be*, are fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. None clash with each other. And the importance of this consideration is apparent, when we recollect, that to one who



judged merely from the dictates of natural reason, previous to the wonderful events in which those prophecies found their fulfilment, there would appear to be much self-contradiction and absurdity in them. No human intelligence could have conceived the method in which they could be *all* fulfilled in *one* person.

And in this lies the great force of the argument we derive from them. They are not only forcible when considered *individually*; but, taken *unitedly*, they are so entirely beyond the power of man to have devised, that we are unable to attribute them, with any show of reason, to a human source. They could be fulfilled only by circumstances beyond the power of man even to *conceive*. Whereas the great characteristic of all attempts to deceive mankind by predictions of future events, has been to aim at probabilities, and not to go beyond what the usual course of nature might be expected to bring about. They are such, therefore, when taken as a whole, as man would have carefully abstained from giving utterance to. They would not have been likely to answer the purpose of *impostors*.

I proceed briefly to notice—

Thirdly, The *views and expectations* with which our inquiries into this subject should be conducted.

First, then, we are to recollect, that the evidence derivable from this source is of a *moral* kind, and that all such evidence is open to cavil, where there is a desire to cavil. Men may raise various objections to the reception of anything which is not the object of their senses, or which comes to them on the testimony of others. It may be *said*, that the prophets were all



leagued together to deceive mankind in their pretence to inspiration, or that the fulfilment of their predictions was the result of accident. And the appeal as to the validity of such objections can only be to the reason of mankind. And the question for the consideration of every man is, whether such objections have in them any ground of reason to rest upon. And if they are such as in the common concerns of life we should think it most unreasonable to act upon, we cannot be doubtful what weight to give them in matters affecting our eternal interests. Assertions made contrary to the manifest dictates of reason, can only be considered as the result of mental weakness or prejudice. But we must not expect that such objections will *cease* to be made because they are unreasonable. If reason always prevailed, even in theory, the state of things would be very different from what it now is. Reason and argument may *refute*, but cannot *silence*, a disputant.

If I might be permitted to offer a test wherewith to try the validity of the evidence for such truths, it would be this: that an adequate ground for the reception of truth resting on moral evidence is afforded us, when some unreasonable supposition is involved in its rejection, and no insuperable difficulties are involved in its reception. And I need hardly add, that, if only an *adequate* ground is afforded us for belief in the Divine origin of Christianity, the value and importance of the blessings it promises make it imperative upon our reason to embrace it.

Again, in estimating the value of the evidence of prophecy for the truth of revealed religion, and Chris-



tianity in particular, we must remember how greatly the force of the argument is diminished to us by our inability to take a complete survey of the *whole* word of prophecy. It relates to a series of events which has been in a course of fulfilment nearly from the beginning. And could we view it as a complete whole, we should see that the course of events in this world, from its beginning to its end, forms one harmonious whole; all things tending to work out the purposes of one mind. By contemplating one particular *part* only, we have as little notion of the *whole*, or even perhaps of the true nature of that portion we are contemplating, as one who looks at one paragraph of a work of great extent and profundity, the parts of which depend upon and cohere with one another, has of the full meaning of the complete work, or even of the passage to which he has directed his attention.

We see one prophecy and another remarkably fulfilled; and so far our faith receives confirmation; but we see only a minute part of a great whole. Our view of it is like that with which we behold the world of nature—limited and imperfect. In the world of nature we see here and there a mine of some precious metal, or of some other substance of value for the supply of the wants of man. But how little notion can we thus acquire of the vast and boundless treasures even of the globe we inhabit! Nevertheless, from the comparatively little we see, we have no hesitation in drawing a conclusion, which reason sanctions, as to the vastness of the treasures which lie hid from our observation. We may with still more justice reason in a similar way as to the con-



tents of the Book of Divine Revelation. And the word of God, if investigated and searched into, will be found as abundant in testimonies calculated to confirm our faith, as the world of nature is in treasures suited to our wants.

And hence we may observe, that in the interpretation of the prophetic word, each prophecy must be interpreted as it stands connected with the whole scheme or system of prophetic revelation.

We must remember, further, *the great end* of prophecy. It was not written to enable those who lived before the period of its fulfilment to know precisely what was about to happen. This was well understood by the ancient prophets; to whom it was revealed, says St. Peter, that *not unto themselves*, but unto *us*, they did minister the things which, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, they delivered to mankind. (1 Peter i. 12.) Hence it was veiled in language to a certain extent dark and obscure, but which was exactly applicable to the events that fulfilled it, and became by them clear and plain. It was not ambiguous, or capable of various meanings, like the heathen oracles, so as to be adapted to almost anything that might happen, but had one definite signification, to which the event exactly answered, and thus proved the foreknowledge of it by Him from whom the prophecy emanated. Thus it answered the purpose for which it was given, which was not to enable man to discern the exact course of future events, but that on its fulfilment we might see in it the proofs of a superintending Divine agency in the affairs of men. To man the precise knowledge of future events would be anything but a



blessing. It would produce a moral paralysis unfitting him for action. Prophecy, therefore, is, by the mercy of God, in consideration of our imperfection, clothed in language which, while it shadows forth the future with sufficient plainness for the purpose of warning or encouragement, awaits for its full interpretation the event of which it speaks.

Moreover, not only is the language of prophecy to a certain extent obscure, but, for the same reason, the prophecies are mostly marked, as time has shown, by two other characteristics, the observance of which is essential to a right understanding of them : I mean, *the reference of the same words, in some cases, to more than one event*, and *the evident close intermixture of predictions that were to be fulfilled at periods of time far distant from one another*.

Many prophecies have their fulfilment in more than one event; the first being a partial fulfilment, bringing, as it were, the first-fruits of the promised blessing or the threatened curse; but subsequent events accomplishing the prophecy in a more full and ample manner.

A remarkable instance of this is in the prophecy of Joel (ii. 28—31), quoted by St. Peter (Acts ii. 17—21), which the Apostle applies to that outpouring of the Spirit which took place immediately after our Lord's ascension, but which is universally admitted to have a more special reference to times yet future.

A still more indubitable instance of this is in the prophecy of Amos (ix. 11, 12), quoted by St. James (Acts xv. 16, 17) as referring to that conversion of the Gentiles that took place in his time, but which is



universally admitted to await a more glorious accomplishment in times yet future. The birth of Christ of the seed of David, and the acknowledgment of Him by large bodies of the Gentiles as their spiritual Head and King, might well be considered as to a great extent fulfilling the promise of raising up the fallen tabernacle of David. But no doubt can exist, from the terms of the prophecy taken as a whole, that there remains a yet more full and complete accomplishment of it.

The prophecy of Balaam (Numb. xxiv. 17 et seq.) is of this kind. This prophecy evidently refers to the Messiah, and yet to a great extent was fulfilled in David. The "Star" and "Sceptre," and the victories gained by the leader thus designated, no doubt refer specially and principally to the Messiah, and His ultimate triumphs. But the prophecy was to a certain extent accomplished in the victories of David over Edom and Moab. As David and his early trials and subsequent conquests and establishment of his kingdom, were types and foreshadowings of the Messiah and the events that were to happen to Him; so, many of the prophecies that referred specially to the latter had a partial fulfilment in the former.

Many of the prophecies that relate to the great cities and kingdoms of the earth are of a similar kind, bearing marks of *both* the characteristics just mentioned. They contain predictions that seem to refer to more than one event, and mix together predictions of events that were to happen at different times far remote from one another.

We see this clearly manifested in the case of the



Jews, and the fate of their two great capital cities, Jerusalem and Samaria. The prophecies of Moses, as recorded Levit. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii., were partially fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the Jews at Babylon; and a portion of the prophecy in Deut. xxviii., namely, that in their captivity they should "serve other gods, wood and stone," (v. 36,) has only, as yet, been accomplished in this primary fulfilment of these prophecies; for in their present dispersion and captivity they have not become idolaters. But there can be no doubt that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and their present dispersion and miserable state, and the desolate condition of their country, form a far more complete and full accomplishment of all the chief denunciations of these prophecies of Moses than any previous events of a similar kind. And the prophet Zechariah (ch. xiv. 2) seems to point to a still future destruction of Jerusalem and the leading of a large portion of its inhabitants into captivity before the period when God will again show favour to His ancient people. And whether at that period they may be again tainted with the sin of idolatry, and worship "the beast and his image," yet remains to be seen. The language of Ezekiel (xxxvii. 23) seems clearly to show, that at least a portion of the children of Israel who shall ultimately be restored to the land of their forefathers shall be restored from a state of idolatry.

So also the prophecies relating to the destruction of Samaria, though they found their primary fulfilment in the judgment executed upon it by the king of



Assyria, were not fully accomplished till successive judgments of a similar kind had been inflicted upon it.

The Divine judgments are at first but partially poured out, and succeeded by a season of revival giving time and opportunity for repentance. But when judgments and mercies have both failed to produce their suitable effect, then the full measure of the threatened judgments falls upon the offender.

So in the case of Tyre. There was more than one city bearing this name. But one was the successor of the other. And the prophecies relating to Tyre, referred both to the first and second city of this name, and to various events in their history—the siege and destruction of the first city by Nebuchadnezzar, its revival, the partial ruin of the second Tyre by Alexander, its Christian character at a subsequent period, and its gradual extinction as a punishment for its sins and the abuse of its Christian privileges and blessings. And these prophecies are intermingled with each other.

The case of Babylon seems to be the same. Clear as is the fulfilment of many of the prophecies respecting Babylon and the land of Chaldea, in its several captures and present state of desolation, there are predictions in them respecting a city of this name, and apparently an Assyrian city, closely connected with events yet future, and which therefore have not yet received their full and final accomplishment. (See Is. xiii., xiv.; Jer. l., li.)

In short, the case with respect to these prophecies is this. The object of prophecy being, so far to lift the veil from the future as to show the Divine prescience and the inspiration of the prophet, while the precise time and circumstances of the occurrences that



were to take place were left in a certain degree of obscurity, events that were to happen in the successive destructions and desolations of various cities and countries at different periods to the end of time, were presented *at once* to the mind of the prophet, and formed the subject of *one* prophecy. The prophecy, therefore, is gradually unfolded as time advances, and the precise time and mode for the fulfilment of its various parts are only ascertained by their accomplishment. The great end of prophecy is thus attained, while man is still left in that degree of ignorance as to the future which is so desirable even for his own happiness.

Many other predictions of events that were to take place at periods of time far distant from one another, are linked together in such close connection, as to lead an interpreter to suppose, that they refer to events almost contemporaneous. In the compass of a few sentences events are foretold, the fulfilment of which spreads through many ages of the world's history.

There are various prophecies that have had a manifest fulfilment of some portions of them that await future events for their complete and full accomplishment. The prophecies relating to our Saviour are of this kind. Intermixed with those which have been clearly fulfilled in His life of suffering upon earth, are others which speak of the glories of His kingdom, and the blessings to be bestowed upon the Jews, which evidently remain to be accomplished.

Thus, for instance, the prophecy in Zechariah, that the Messiah should come to Jerusalem in an humble condition, "sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass," (Zech. ix. 9,) which is expressly referred to by St. Matthew (xxi. 5) and St. John (xii. 15) as fulfilled



in the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem in this way, is immediately followed by the announcement, that "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth," and by predictions of providential deliverances and mercies vouchsafed to the Jewish nation which yet remain to be accomplished. (See remainder of ch. ix. and ch. x.)

So again, the prediction of the birth of the Messiah at Bethlehem in the Book of Micah (v. 2) is in the midst of a prophecy which clearly awaits future events for its accomplishment.

Prophecy, thus constructed, while it is protected from misapplication for the mere gratification of curiosity or that precise anticipation of future events which would act injuriously on the welfare of mankind, answers various most important purposes.

It is a standing and manifest proof to all men, that there is a Being to whom all future events are accurately known, and by whom they are ordered, watching, directing, and controlling all things.

In the course of its fulfilment, it proves the certainty of the accomplishment both of the threatenings and promises of God. From the execution of the threatened punishments upon guilty states and nations men are warned of the sure penalty of transgression. From the mercies vouchsafed to the servants of God, and especially in this latter dispensation from the accomplishment of the prophecies relating to the work of human redemption by a Divine Saviour, men are certified of the stability of that hope which rests upon the Divine promises.

Thus the great object of prophecy is accomplished.



That object appears to have been, so far to unveil the future as to reveal to man *the prominent outlines* of God's subsequent providential dealings with mankind, and especially those events that were to have a decisive influence upon his present position or future hopes as a being destined for translation to another and an eternal world; but at the same time to reveal these things in terms which, until their accomplishment, should leave men unacquainted with the precise time and manner in which they were to be fulfilled.

It was a task which could be accomplished by none but a mind of perfect prescience and infinite wisdom; and perhaps the evidence that is to be found for the Divine origin of prophecy in the perfect foreknowledge of the future which it manifests in those parts that have been accomplished, is hardly stronger than that which is afforded by *the nature of its construction*.

Once more, I must observe, that in considering the *mode* in which the several prophecies are to be fulfilled, we must make a distinction as to their *nature*. There are some that state facts *literally*; there are others of an evidently *figurative* character. Before the accomplishment, it may perhaps be difficult precisely to draw the line between the two. Some of the events connected with the person and work of our Lord, for instance, were of such a nature that those who lived before His advent might, with some reason, have supposed the prophecies relating to them to be of a *figurative* kind, but the event proved them to be *literal*. But there are other prophecies of a more general nature, such as those descriptive of the state



of the Church under the Gospel, which are of wider application, and therefore cannot be expected to have the same evidence of their fulfilment, in any particular events, as the former.

Hence arises the diverse interpretation given to some of the prophecies. But the argument for a Divine origin is not affected by this. The clear fulfilment of the most important of them in certain definite events, united with an adequate fulfilment of the rest in other events, is as much as the most rigid laws of evidence can demand.

Lastly, let us remember the *responsibility* which our possession of the word of prophecy brings upon us.

The testimony of prophecy is one in which we see the Divine consideration of man's infirmity peculiarly manifested. The moral excellence of Christianity, and even the miracles that accompanied its first promulgation, are evidences that seem to be, as it were, *necessary* characteristics of such a dispensation; but a series of prophetic announcements, stretching throughout a long period of time, and involving events gradually to be developed until the final consummation of all things, is a species of evidence such as it could hardly have entered into the mind of man to expect. It is a voluntary exercise of one of the most characteristic and incommunicable attributes of God, for the purpose of affording us a sure resting-place on which to fix our faith. It is a testimony, therefore, which makes a special appeal both to our *judgment* and our *hearts*. It is the fruit of that Divine compassion that has sought to give us every motive for belief in a revelation affecting our best and dearest

interests. It is an additional assurance, that "He willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live;" that "He hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." It adds, therefore, a proportionate weight to the responsibility which rests upon us.



## SERMON II.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, November 26, 1854.)

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DEUT. XXVIII. 15.

*“ But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee.”*

HAVING, on a former occasion, drawn your attention to the *general character* of the subject of these Lectures, I now proceed to consider it more in *detail*, and investigate its various parts.

The subject is, the proof which fulfilled prophecy affords of the Divine origin of the revelation contained in the Holy Scriptures, and particularly of the Christian religion.

Permit me, however, to remind you, before I proceed, that as fulfilled prophecy forms but *one* of the various evidences we have for the Divine origin of Christianity,—and that if we would have our minds duly impressed with a sense of the strength of those evidences, we must view them as *a whole*,—so is this much more the case with respect to *one instance* in any of these various departments of evidence. And

one case of fulfilled prophecy out of the hundreds that remain to us, seems hardly more than as one drop in a flowing stream, when compared with the magnitude of the proof as a whole.

But, nevertheless, it is by examining in detail the various parts of which the whole is composed, that we shall arrive at a more satisfactory and intelligent conviction of its real weight and value.

And having thus investigated it in its various parts, we shall be better able to appreciate that conjunction of vastness of extent with unity and harmony, that I noticed on a former occasion as characteristic of the ancient prophecies. We shall be enabled, I trust, to see, that though the word of prophecy stretches throughout a period of several thousand years, and was enunciated by men of very different periods and circumstances, and relates to events of very different kinds, there is a unity of *character and object*, and a mutual *accordance and harmony* in them, showing them to have proceeded from the same source.

Let me also again remind you, that, in each individual case, the evidence being of a moral kind, nothing is more easy than to cavil at it; and that the fact that such cavils are raised affords no argument against the validity of such evidence.

That God *may* have made some communication of His will to man is undeniable. And the fact of such a communication having been made, *must*, with the great majority of mankind, rest upon moral evidence. The sole question then is, what is the amount of such evidence which ought to satisfy the mind? And the appeal is to reason alone. But it is obvious, that



the investigation must be carried on by a mind free from the bias of prejudice, and recollecting the responsibility resting upon it for conducting the inquiry with a *desire* to ascertain the truth.

It will be remembered that, on a former occasion, the leading subjects of the prophecies of Holy Scripture were divided into three classes.

1st. Those that relate to the person and work of Christ.

2ndly. Those that relate to the history of various ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth.

3rdly. Those that relate to the Church of Christ during its post-apostolic period.

I propose, then, to bring before you, in these Lectures, a few of the more remarkable prophecies that occur under *each* of these classes; and I shall begin with those that relate to the history of various ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth. Their testimony alone affords abundant proof of the Divine inspiration of the prophets of the Old Testament, and consequently of the Divine origin of the religion they taught, and thus indirectly, through the connexion of the two Dispensations, of the truth also of the Christian Religion.

And if I am unable, as doubtless I shall be unable, to adduce any *new* evidences on a subject which has been so often and so thoroughly investigated, it is nevertheless a duty and a privilege again and again to call to our remembrance, on such occasions as these, the proofs which Holy Scripture affords us of the continual interposition of a Divine hand in the affairs of mankind.

Among the prophecies relating to earthly kingdoms and nations, we naturally give the first place to those that relate to the descendants of Abraham. It is the testimony of God himself, that he had chosen them to be, in a peculiar sense, *His* people (Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8); and the numerous prophecies of Holy Scripture concerning them, if collected together, would form a complete history of all the more important events by which their course has been, and is to be, distinguished.

My object, therefore, on the present occasion, is to direct your attention to one or two of the more remarkable prophecies respecting the events that were to befall the Hebrew nation and their land, pointing out their fulfilment as recorded in the page of history.

And among the multitude that might be adduced, which time prevents me from even noticing, none is more adapted to our purpose than that which was left on record by the great Jewish lawgiver Moses, from which the words of our text are taken.

Now, in contemplating the language in which he addresses his nation, after having laid down a code of laws for their observance, we are at once struck with a *peculiarity* that distinguishes his admonitions from those of all mere earthly Lawgivers. He hesitates not to forewarn them, in the name of God, that the nature of the events that would subsequently befall them depended entirely upon their observance or non-observance of the statutes he had given them. And this warning is given in no mere general terms, such as human foresight might have suggested, but by



the announcement of certain *particular* blessings, and judgments of a *definite* kind.

Thus, among the threatened judgments, we find the following clear intimation of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the subsequent dispersion of the Jewish nation over the whole earth; the state in which they should be during that period; and, notwithstanding all, their preservation as a distinct people; the Lord (to use the words of Holy Scripture) not making a full end of them, but reserving them, as no other people ever was reserved under such circumstances, for another season of mercy. "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young. . . . And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land. . . . And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. . . . The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom and towards her son and towards her daughter, and towards her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and towards her children which she shall bear; for she shall eat them, for want of all

things, secretly, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." (Deut. xxviii. 49—57.)

"Ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. . . . And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, . . . and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." (vv. 63—68.)

"And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them." (Lev. xxvi. 44.)

Similar warnings to those of Moses were also abundantly added by succeeding prophets. And the remarkable fact of the preservation of the Jewish people, even in their dispersion among all the nations of the earth, is thus referred to by Jeremiah and Hosea. "I will make a full end," it is said in Jeremiah, "of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not utterly cut thee off, or leave thee wholly unpunished." (Jer. xlvi. 28.) "The children of Israel," says Hosea, "shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children



of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." (Hos. iii. 4, 5.) Many similar prophecies might be added to these.

Now, in these denunciations we have a clear statement that certain definite judgments were, under stated circumstances, to befall the Jewish nation; and the prophecies of Moses were uttered even before the Jews had obtained possession of the promised land, and while they were, in fact, but wanderers in a wilderness, unpossessed of a single foot of ground which they could call their own, and much more than a thousand years from the time when they were to be fulfilled.

Have these judgments, then, been inflicted? History records their exact fulfilment.

We may observe that several judgments of *the same kind* as those here mentioned *preceded* that full and complete fulfilment of the prophecy, that took place at the last destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Jewish nation by the Romans. It would seem as if the gracious Providence of God had given many previous warnings as to the real character of the threatened judgment, fulfilling it at first but partially, sufficiently to show the certainty of His word as well in its threatenings as its promises, but not at once visiting upon them the full penalty for their transgressions.

And thus, brethren, he deals with us as individuals; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Happy will it be for us, if we learn this lesson from those trials and sufferings that from time to time are permitted to befall us.

They are the punishment of sin. But they are not the full threatened punishment. Much more remains for a future period, if sin is persisted in and remains unpardoned.

Thus, for instance,—to proceed with our more immediate subject,—on the invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar, and on various other occasions, many of the calamities referred to in these prophecies were experienced by the Jews. These prophecies, as I have already observed, refer to more than one event. As they predicted the judgments that were to come upon the Jews in case of their disobedience to the Divine commands, successive periods of rebellion have produced successive fulfilments of them to a greater or less extent. And there are similar prophecies respecting that remarkable people which seem still to await future events for their fulfilment—events which will be a still further proof of the truth of those prophetic warnings of the consequences of disobedience given them by their first great lawgiver. (See Mic. iv. 10; Zech. ii. 6, 7; xiv. 2.)\* But at the time of the Roman invasion, the prophecies which I have quoted received a full accomplishment. Then the measure of the iniquities of the Jewish nation was full, and the wrath of God came upon them to the full extent of the threatened judgments.

And now let us mark how exactly the prophecies relating to them were fulfilled.

The nation that was to come against them was to come from far, even from the ends of the earth,—words exactly descriptive of the Roman armies, par-

\* See note A. in Notes to Sermon ii. in Appendix.



ticularly as they were brought from the most distant parts for the invasion of Judea. It was to come "as swift as the eagle flieth;" or rather, according to the original, "as the eagle flieth;" words which, while they well describe the rapidity and vigour of the movements of the invading army, are remarkably applicable as descriptive of the Roman standard.

It was to be a nation, moreover, whose tongue they should not understand. In the case of former invasions which had been made by Eastern nations, the language of the enemy, either from having some affinity with their own, or from previous intercourse, was in a measure known to them. But the language of the nations of the West, of which the Roman armies were composed, was entirely unknown among the Jews; no intercourse having existed between the two previous to the invasion of Judea by Pompey.

It was to be a nation of fierce countenance; by which the appearance of the Romans of that period might well be distinguished from that of the Orientals whom they had been accustomed to see.

Every city was to be taken, and their high and fenced walls levelled with the ground;—a prophecy which was fulfilled to the letter.

The awful circumstances, moreover, which it was predicted should mark the straitness of the siege wherewith they should be distressed, happened precisely as foretold. Circumstances of a very similar character marked the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. But the prophecy was more exactly accomplished at the time of which we are speaking. All will recollect the account given by Josephus\* of

\* See Note B. to Sermon ii. in Appendix.

the way in which the most appalling part of this prophecy was fulfilled to the letter at that time, and over which, therefore, we gladly draw a veil. But the point which it behoves us specially to bear in mind in this history in connexion with our present subject is, that the circumstance was one of so revolting and unnatural a kind, as almost to forbid belief in its possibility. As such it seems to have been regarded by the Jewish historian himself; and in this character it forms a striking proof of the Divine origin of the prophecy.

Again, in the prophetic account given of the state of the Jews during their dispersion, do we not see a graphic description of the trials and indignities they had for many ages to undergo, and the complete prostration of mind which was the result?

And lastly, is not the accuracy of the prophecy remarkably tested in their wonderful preservation as a distinct people among all the nations in the midst of which they have sojourned? Precisely as it was predicted, a full end has been made of the nations that at various times took them captive, but *they* remain to the present day; evidently (we may surely say) preserved for that dispensation of mercy which is predicted for them "in the latter days."

And, though time forbids me to dwell upon the point, I must here remark, that this event, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent dispersion and calamities of the Jewish people, formed the subject of prophecy with our Blessed Lord; and His prophetic lamentations over the devoted city and the fate of its inhabitants, are important proofs of His real character.



But there is one more point in this remarkable prophecy of Moses which deserves our attention, and that is his prophetic description of the state of the land of which they were about to become possessed, after their expulsion from it for their iniquities.

The land which they were about to inherit was at that time pre-eminently fruitful, so as to be called a land flowing with milk and honey. But in case of their disobedience, the land itself was to be cursed. And this was the denunciation pronounced against it:—  
 “So that the generation to come of your children, that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it . . . even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers . . . for they went and served other gods and worshipped them . . . and the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book,” &c. (Deut. xxix. 22—28.)

And this general denunciation was repeated and amplified by succeeding prophets, so as to embrace even the minute details of the nature of the predicted desolation.

For thus do they speak in God’s name:—“Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers.” (Is. xxxii. 13—15.) “The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled . . . the land mourneth and fadeth away.” (Is. xxiv. 1—13.) “I will lay it [*i.e.* my

vineyard] waste . . . ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah." (Is. v. 6, 10.) "The whole land shall be desolate." (Jer. iv. 27.) "I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations." (Ezek. vi. 14.)

And this was to last without intermission, or, as the prophet Isaiah expresses it, "for ever," "*until* the Spirit be poured upon us [*i.e.*, the Jewish people] from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." (Is. xxxii. 14, 15.)

What then has been the state of Syria since the expulsion of the Jewish nation from it? What is the testimony of "the stranger coming from a far land"? Let us hear the words of such a stranger, and that stranger one by whom the testimony of prophecy was either unknown or disbelieved, the infidel traveller Volney. "The temples are thrown down, the palaces demolished, the ports filled up, the towns destroyed, and the earth, stripped of inhabitants, seems a dreary burying place." "From whence," he exclaims with an ejaculation of astonishment, "proceed such melancholy revolutions? For *what cause* is the fortune of these countries so *strikingly changed*? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated?"\*

Such is the involuntary exclamation of "the stranger coming from a far land."

And so remarkable has been the unproductiveness

\* See Note C. to Sermon ii. in Appendix.



of the land, that some sceptical writers have on that ground thrown a doubt upon the testimony of Scripture as to its former fertility.\* But to *them* we have an abundant answer in the impartial evidence borne to the correctness of the account given of it in Holy Scripture by ancient *heathen* writers.† They are, therefore, in this, but involuntary witnesses against themselves.

Much might be added from the writings of the ancient prophets respecting the judgments that were to fall on the other cities of Judea, and the general state of desolation by which the whole land was to be characterized. But the necessary limits of these Lectures prevent more than this passing allusion to them; and the subject has been so largely illustrated of late years, that there is less need to enter here into a full discussion of it.‡

Now it cannot be denied, that human foresight would have been utterly insufficient to enable Moses to utter these predictions. And for this reason, namely, that *the things predicted* were not in accordance with the ordinary course of events.

If the Jews were to be overcome and taken captive by their enemies, the probability was, that this would be accomplished by neighbouring nations, not by one that came from the ends of the earth; and that if they were to be expelled from their fruitful land, it would be taken possession of by others and still remain what it had previously been; and that if they were to be dispersed among all nations, they would

\* See Note D. to Sermon ii. in Appendix.

† See Note E. to Sermon ii. in Appendix.

‡ See Note F. to Sermon ii. in Appendix.

share the common fate of others under similar circumstances, and not remain a distinct people.

But, under the guidance of a Divine impulse, Moses and the prophets hesitated not to proclaim for them a peculiar destiny, and even to particularize the details of those wonderful events of which they were to be the subjects; and though three thousand years have elapsed since the prophecy of Moses was uttered, successive ages have only added fresh testimonies to its truth, and consequently to its Divine origin.

The Jewish nation, and the land they once possessed, remain to this day standing witnesses, presented to the eyes of all men, of the Divine origin of the prophecies of Holy Scripture, and consequently of the revelation with which they stand connected.

Let it be remembered, also, that the few prophetic notices thus pointed out might be multiplied more than a hundred fold, and greatly increased in weight by the minuteness and exactness of their details.

But enough have been adduced to show the nature and strength of the argument, and to suffice for rational conviction; and that is all which our present object requires.

We cannot, however, quit this subject without remarking how forcible an illustration it affords us of the way in which God deals with nations to whom He has given a knowledge of His will. Their history may not be, and cannot be expected to be, *foretold*, like that of the Israelites. It pleased God to show to the Jewish nation marks of his special favour, and to single them out from all the nations of the earth as, in a peculiar sense, *His* people. And in accordance



with this design, he revealed to them beforehand, by His servants the prophets, the whole course of His future dealings with them. But, in this, they form an exception to the other nations of the earth. Moreover, such premonitions are less needed by Christian nations. Not only have they the example of the Jewish nation before their eyes, but the declarations of the Holy Scriptures, particularly of the New Testament, are so clear as to the mode in which God deals with mankind, that no special forewarnings as to the fate of particular nations are needed.

We have much clearer light than the Jews had, notwithstanding their possession of the word of prophecy. He who is emphatically styled *the Light of the world*, has given us His instructions, warnings, and promises.

We know, that in all cases, sooner or later, national corruption and departure from God will be followed by national judgments, and national apostasy to idolatrous worship by national ruin.

We learn, also, from the history of the Israelites, that, though the final judgment may be long delayed, though many respites may be granted, calamities of a less severe kind being sent as warnings of the fate that awaits the transgressor, the threatened punishment of sin is sure. And greatly are the responsibilities of mankind increased by the more abundant light and privileges enjoyed by those who live under the Gospel Dispensation.

Finally, let us remember, for our own personal warning, that the sins of nations are but the aggregate of the sins of the individuals that compose them ;

and that the account to which men will be called hereafter is one in which they will be judged, not as members of a particular nation, nor even merely as members of an orthodox Church, but as *individuals* who have possessed a certain amount of spiritual light and privileges.

Let us not, then, after the example of so large a proportion of that people whose history we have just been considering, content ourselves with the *name* of God's true worshippers, and live as if we disowned His authority and despised His laws. Let us not fall, after the same example of unbelief. The clear exhibition of Divine love and mercy, made to us in the death of Christ, has placed us in a position of far greater responsibility even than that once occupied by the favoured race of Abraham. The evil of sin, the price paid as an atonement for it, the readiness of God to accept the returning penitent, and the duties to which He calls us as a people redeemed by the blood of His incarnate Son from the curse which sin had brought upon us, are all clearly revealed to us in the Gospel of Christ. And "if he that despised Moses' law died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, a common thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. x. 28, 29 ; ii. 3.)



## SERMON III.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, January 7th, 1855.)

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EZEK. XXV. 1—4.

*“Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.”*

AMONG the prophecies relating to the history of the ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, those referring to the Jews (some of which formed the subject of our last Discourse) are, as might be expected from the peculiar interferences of God in their behalf, and His selection of them as more especially His own people, far more full and extensive than those relating to any other nation. But there are many others, which, so far as our present subject is concerned, are almost equally instructive. Among these, that which seems to claim the next place is the testimony borne by several of the prophets to the fate of the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, and of their country.

The earliest prophetic intimation of the fate of the house of Esau fell, as it will be well remembered,

from the lips of his aged parent Isaac, after he had unwittingly, but by Divine appointment, given his blessing to Jacob and his descendants. "Behold," said Isaac, "thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." (Gen. xxvii. 39, 40.)

For many centuries there seemed but little probability of the fulfilment of this prophecy, so far at least as it respected Jacob's dominion over Esau. And to those who lived during that period, and were cognizant of Isaac's prophecy, it might seem as if the predictions of the aged patriarch were but idle words, having no foundation but in the excited imagination of their author.

Esau and his posterity shortly became powerful chiefs, possessed of a valuable and fertile country; while the posterity of Jacob, so far from reigning over them, were for more than two centuries in bondage to the Egyptians,\* and for a long period after that time destitute of any political power.

But with Him from whom that prophecy originally emanated one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. When the time for the prosperity of Jacob's seed had come, though several centuries had passed away since the prophecy was uttered, he became, as was predicted, lord over his brethren, and his mother's sons bowed down to him. (Gen. xxvii. 29.) From the time of David to that of Jehoram,

\* See Note A. in Notes to Sermon iii. in Appendix.



the successor of Jehoshaphat, the land of Edom was altogether under the dominion of the kings of Judah, and governed by a deputy placed there by them. (1 Kings xxii. 47.) But in the time of Jehoram, from whom, on account of his extreme wickedness, God withdrew His protection, Esau, as was here predicted, broke the yoke of Jacob from off his neck. (2 Kings viii. 20—22; 2 Chron. xxi. 8—10.) For the Edomites, having revolted from Jehoram and expelled his deputy, chose a king of their own, and under him recovered their liberty, and were never afterwards subject to the kings of Judah. Long, therefore, as the fulfilment of this prophecy was delayed, it was ultimately fulfilled to the letter; and the delay shows us, that where no specific period is assigned for the accomplishment of a prophecy, the lapse even of many ages affords no ground for doubt as to its truth; and is in fact, on its fulfilment, an additional proof that it emanated from One before whom the whole future is spread out to view.

From this period no prophetic announcements concerning the events that were to happen to the posterity of Esau occur in the Sacred Writings until after they had again become an independent nation. We then find in several of the prophets clear intimations of the fate that awaited them and their country.

Among these the most remarkable are those of Isaiah (xxxiv. 5—17), Jeremiah (xlix. 16—22), Ezekiel (xxv. 12—14; xxxv. throughout), and Obadiah (throughout).

All these prophets predicted the complete destruction of Edom as a nation, and the desolation of their



land, which, according to Jeremiah, was ultimately to be such that no man should abide there, neither any son of man dwell in it. (Jer. xlix. 18.) And the judgments denounced against them were said to be more especially the consequence of their conduct towards their brethren the Jews.

The testimony of Ezekiel is as follows:—After the words of our text, the prophet adds,—“Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. . . . I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.” And after some further denunciations, it is added, “Thus saith the Lord God; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

The prophecy of Obadiah is still more full and particular:—“Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom: We have heard a rumour from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle. Behold I have made thee small among the heathen; thou art



greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." And after the addition of further particulars showing the completeness of the desolation, a reason is given for the chastisement, derived from the nature of their conduct towards the house of Jacob; some of the particulars of which are described. "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as



thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee : thy reward shall return upon thine own head. . . . . But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness ; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them ; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau ; for the Lord hath spoken it.” (Obad. 1—18. See to the end of the chapter.)

The testimony of the other prophets is of a similar kind.

Such was the testimony of prophecy respecting the fate of the Edomites, or (as they were also called) Idumeans, and their country.

Let us now observe in what way these predictions were fulfilled. Unfortunately the historical details that remain to us respecting the conduct of the Idumeans, and the events that happened to them, are of a very scanty nature, so as to render it impossible to compare, with all that completeness and precision that we could desire, the language of prophecy with the circumstances in which the details of the prophetic announcements found their accomplishment. It will be observed, that, in the prophecy of Obadiah particularly, certain special incidents in their conduct towards the Jews in the day of their calamity are alluded to. The minuteness of the details to which the prophet descends in describing their standing aloof when strangers carried Jacob away captive, their entering his gate in the day of his calamity and laying hands on his substance, their standing in the crossway to



cut off those that escaped, presents us with one of those marvellous pictures of the future which are to be found only in the Book of God, and shows how completely even the most insignificant future events are present to the Divine mind.

But to trace all these details accurately in the circumstances that occurred, would require a more full historic record than we possess. Enough, however, remains of the *general* features of their history to show that the word of prophecy had its full accomplishment.

It must also be premised—and a remarkable fact it is—that as, in the case of the Jews, the chief prophecies relating to the Jewish nation had a reference to more than one event,—the *first* fulfilment being the destruction of their city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and their captivity in Babylon; and another fulfilment occurring in a similar but more complete destruction of them by the Romans, and their subsequent dispersion as exiles and captives over the whole earth; and a still further fulfilment of a portion of them being apparently reserved for times yet future,—so, the prophecies relating to the Idumeans seem also to have a reference to several distinct periods of judgment.

We must again remark, therefore, in their case, as we had occasion to do in that of the Jews, how the mercy and longsuffering of God are displayed even in the judgments he brings upon the guilty nations of the earth. The full threatened punishment is not inflicted until repeated warnings and visitations have been followed by repeated transgressions, and it has been fully proved that mercy and forbearance only

lead to an increased amount of guilt. The degree of guilt resting upon the Jews as a nation at the time of their first overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar, was far less than that which weighed them down at the period of their destruction by the Romans. For, great as were the national sins in which they were involved at the *former* period, at the *latter* they were under the guilt of having rejected and crucified the very Saviour and Deliverer to whom their own inspired oracles had taught them to look for salvation.

Such is too often the case, as sad experience warns us, not only with nations but with individuals. When the judgments of God are upon us, then we learn righteousness. But when those judgments are removed, returning peace and prosperity make men forgetful of the past and heedless of the future, and sin is too often repeated, even with circumstances of aggravation, until the measure of their iniquity is full, and Divine forbearance has reached its extreme limit.

The first fulfilment of the prophecies of Ezekiel and Obadiah, and the other prophets, respecting Idumea, took place not long after the final capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. And in accordance with that character of mercy which distinguishes the Divine dispensations, we find that a distinct warning was given by God to the Edomites, through the prophet Jeremiah, of the consequences that would follow rebellion against the king of Babylon, to whom God had given for a time the nations of the earth. For it appears that after the departure of Nebuchadnezzar out of Judea and



Syria, at the end of his second war with the Jews, the kings of the neighbouring nations, and among them the king of Edom, made a league with Zedekiah king of Judah against Nebuchadnezzar, to renounce his authority, and oppose any attempt to bring them under subjection.\* Upon which the prophet Jeremiah was commissioned by God to give them this warning:—"Thus saith the Lord to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of *Edom*, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; and command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom that will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of

\* See Note B. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.

Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand." (Jer. xxvii. 2—8.)

Let us pause for a moment to observe the lesson which this language conveys to us as to God's sovereign disposal of the kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever He pleases. Not only are future events foreknown to Him, but they are the result either of his direct agency or permission. And his prophetic word, delivered by his servant Jeremiah, here announces his will, that all these kingdoms should be subject to Nebuchadnezzar, his son, and his son's son, and should then pass into other hands; and this warning having been given, judgment is denounced against all those who disobeyed the heavenly injunction. After this warning, rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar was rebellion against God.

This prophetic announcement was not long in being fulfilled. The first and perhaps the heaviest portion of the visitation fell upon Jerusalem itself, the city being destroyed and the temple burnt, and all the principal inhabitants carried away captive, a few only of the poorer of the people being left to till the land.

Two years only had elapsed from this event when the predicted judgments fell upon the other nations of Syria. At that time Nebuchadnezzar returned into Syria and commenced the siege of Tyre, which however, from the peculiar position and strength of the city, occupied his army thirteen years. But, during the same period, his armies, overrunning Syria, executed against the nations who had been



forewarned by Jeremiah the judgments with which they had been threatened.\*

Of the circumstances which attended the subjugation of these nations we are unfortunately destitute of any precise historical details. How far, therefore, the devastation of the country of Idumea was carried, does not appear; but it is not probable that it was more than a temporary destruction of their strongholds, and perhaps the captivity of some of the principal inhabitants. But to this extent the judgment denounced was certainly executed—a fulfilment which, like that which happened to the Jews, was not the *full* measure of the threatened punishment, but enough to show the *source* from which the warning came, and the *certainty* that such announcements will be fulfilled.

But it will be observed, that one reason for the judgment inflicted upon the children of Esau was, their treacherous conduct to Israel in the day of their calamity, alluded to by the prophet Ezekiel, and still more particularly by Obadiah.

The want of historical records respecting the events here alluded to prevents us in a great measure from showing the exact fulfilment of the minor details of the prophecy. But there is one remarkable exception. One part of the charge is,—“Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway to cut off those of his that did escape.” (Obad. 14.) Now, in the account given, in the first (or, as some call it, second) book of the Maccabees, of the war waged by Judas Maccabeus against the children of Esau in Idumea, after the

\* See Note C. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.

return of the Jews from Babylon (by which, as we shall presently have to observe, another portion of this prophecy was fulfilled), it is said, that he “remembered the injury of the children of Bœan [an Idumean chief] who had been a snare and a stumbling-block unto the people [of Israel] *in that they lay in wait for them in the ways.*” (2 Maccab. v. 4. Cotton’s translation.)

In this incidental notice of the conduct of the Edomites towards Israel, we have a remarkable proof of the precise fulfilment of all the details of this prophecy.

Further, among the judgments predicted against Idumea, some were to be inflicted by the Jews themselves on their return to their own land. “Upon mount Zion,” said the prophet Obadiah, “shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them and devour them.” (Obad. 17, 18.)

The precise fulfilment of this prediction we find in the recorded acts of the celebrated Jewish leader Judas Maccabæus. The terms used of him by the historian who narrates his exploits remarkably coincide with those here used by the prophet. He says of him, that “the wicked shrunk for fear of him, and all the workers of iniquity were confounded together, and deliverance was made to prosper in his hand;” and of his conduct towards the enemies of the Jews he says, “he pursued the wicked, and sought them



out, and *burnt up those who vexed his people.*" (2 Maccab. iii. 5, 6. Cotton's translation.) And among those with whom he thus dealt were the children of Esau in Idumea. For thus writes the historian who has recorded his acts:—"Then Judas fought against the children of Esau, in Idumea, at Acrabattine, because they besieged Israel; and he gave them a great overthrow, and brought them down, and took their spoils. Also he remembered the injury of the children of Boëan, who had been a snare and a stumbling-block unto the people, in that they lay in wait for them in the ways. And they were shut up by him in the towns, and he encamped against them, and destroyed them utterly, and *burnt the towers of that place with fire, with all those who were therein.*" "Afterward went Judas forth with his brethren, and fought against the children of Esau in the land toward the south, where he smote Hebron and the towns thereof, and pulled down the fortress of it, and *burnt the towers thereof round about.*" (2 Maccab. v. 3—5 and 65. Cotton's translation.)

And thus emphatically did the house of Jacob—delivered and restored to their possessions—become a fire, and the house of Esau stubble to be consumed by it.

But, as in the case of the Jews, there remained a *second* and more *complete* fulfilment of these prophecies, to be accomplished in the subsequent history of the Edomites.

The second fulfilment of their predicted cruelty to their brethren the Jews in the time of their calamity we find recorded by Josephus in his account of what

took place at Jerusalem not long before its final destruction by the Romans. He there tells us,\* that when the Roman armies were almost at the gates of Jerusalem, at the instigation of a wicked faction in the city, 20,000 Idumeans made their way into the city, and committed upon the almost unresisting inhabitants the most fearful barbarities. “Nor did the Idumeans,” he says, “spare any body; for as they are naturally a most barbarous and bloody nation, and had been distressed by the tempest, they made use of their weapons against those that had shut the gates against them, and acted in the same manner both to those that supplicated for their lives and to those that fought them, insomuch that they ran through those with their swords who desired them to remember the relation there was between them. . . . And now the outer temple was all of it overflowed with blood; and that day as it advanced saw 8500 dead bodies there. And the rage of the Idumeans was not satiated by these slaughters, but they now betook themselves to the city, and *plundered every house, and slew every one they met,*” among whom was the high-priest Ananus. To which account Josephus adds this remark:—“I should not mistake if I said, that the death of Ananus was *the beginning of the destruction of the city*, and that from this very day may be dated the overthrow of her wall, and the ruin of her affairs, whereon they saw their high-priest, and the procurer of their preservation, slain in the midst of their city . . . a venerable and a very just man.” He then proceeds to detail further acts of barbarity, and the

\* See Note D. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.



circumstances attending the continuance of those scenes of pillage and bloodshed which they carried on for several days. Thus, in the prophetic language of Ezekiel, did they “shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, *in the time that their iniquity had an end* ;” and thus, in the still more expressive language of Obadiah, did they show “violence” to their brother Jacob, “entering into their gate in the day of their calamity, and laying hands on their substance in the day of their calamity.”

But, as before, a day of vengeance awaited them. The precise period at which their country was finally devastated, and their stronghold, the city of Petra, reduced to the state in which it has been found by modern travellers, is but a matter of conjecture. But the *fact* of its state being precisely that which was assigned to it by the ancient prophecies, is indisputable, and *with this fact only* are we concerned. On a point which is now so well known, through the accounts of modern travellers, as the correspondence of the present state of Edom, and the ruins of its capital, with that which was foreshadowed in the prophecies to which I have called your attention, I will not now dwell at any length.

Suffice it to specify one or two of the more remarkable points in which the correspondence of the two is observable. In ancient times Petra was one of the most important cities in the great highway of eastern commerce. Its destruction and desolation have been so complete, that the very existence of the ruins was almost unknown for centuries ; and now that the

enterprise of modern travellers has succeeded in discovering its remains, it still answers only the purpose of attesting the truth of the prophetic record. Though they made their nest in the clefts of the rock, even from thence have they been brought down; and the desolate ruins of their habitations, hewn out of the solid rock, are left to be the dwelling-place of the wild beasts.

Originally the land of Edom was among the most fruitful on the face of the earth. The prophecy was, that it should be "a desolation;" "from generation to generation it shall lie waste," "I will make thee most desolate." The account given by travellers is, that such is the appearance of desolation and barrenness presented by the country, that but for the existence of a few remains here and there of ruined cities and vestiges of the works of man, it would be hardly credible that it could have been at any time the abode of man.

"He shall stretch out upon it," said Isaiah, "the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness." (Is. xxxiv. 11.) A traveller, describing the view from "the western plain," says,—"We had now before us an immense expanse of dreary country entirely covered with black flints, with here and there some hilly chains rising from the plain."\*

"The cormorant and the bittern," said Isaiah, "shall possess it, the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it . . . . it shall be a habitation of dragons and a court for owls . . . . the screech owl also shall

\* See Note E. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.



rest there and find for herself a place of rest," &c. (Is. xxxiv. 11—16.) The accounts given by impartial travellers, without any reference to these prophecies, show that these are precisely the animals by which the place is infested, and with which it swarms. It is said that the Arabs avoid the ruins on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm; and at night the crying of the screech-owl is heard by travellers above the noise of all the rest of the wild animals that make their abode there. But for the way in which the details of this part of the prophecy have been fulfilled, I must refer you to the accounts which have been so abundantly furnished by recent travellers.\*

Whether there remains a still further and final accomplishment of some of these prophecies in future events, I will not now stop to inquire. Our present subject limits us to a consideration of the past. But it seems not improbable that such may be the case.

We have thus taken a brief view, such as time would permit, of some of the leading prophecies relating to the posterity of Esau, and the way in which they have been fulfilled.

It remains only, that we take one retrospective glance at the condition of Idumea when these prophecies were uttered. It was at that time a State possessed of a most fruitful country, teeming with wealth brought by their merchants from all parts of the earth. From its position it is said to have formed the emporium of the commerce of the East.

Moreover, it was noted as the abode of science and

\* See Note F. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.

wisdom of all kinds. It is the opinion of Sir Isaac Newton, that it was the nursery of the arts and sciences, and that they were “propagated from Arabia Petræa into Egypt, Chaldæa, Syria, Asia Minor and Europe.”\* To this fact the word of prophecy thus beautifully alludes;—“Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?” (Jer. xlix. 7.) “Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?” (Obad. 8.)

It was the abode also of men noted for their valour, “the mighty men of Edom,” as the prophets describe them. (Jer. xlix. 22; Obad. 9.)

Its capital city was formed of habitations hewn out of the solid rock, and so situated that it might seem able to *defy* any hostile assault. And to the spirit engendered by this fancied security the prophetic word thus bears witness:—“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?” (Obad. 3.)

When it was in the full enjoyment, then, of all these privileges, in the height of its glory, in the pride of its fancied security, then it was that the Divine word went forth against it; then it was, that the denunciation came, “Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord:” then it was, that all those prophetic announcements were made

\* See Note G. to Sermon iii. in Appendix.



which we have just been contemplating; and the proud city, the capital of Eastern commerce, hewn out of the rock, defended by the mightiest warriors, and peopled by the wisest among the nations of the earth, was foredoomed to be from generation to generation a desolate ruin, the abode of dragons and owls, through which no man should pass.

Alas! for the pride of human glory, when the wrath of an offended God rests upon it!

The question, then, is, on what possible ground we can account for such prophecies having been uttered against a nation in the full zenith of their prosperity, noted for their wisdom and valour, abounding in wealth, whose capital city might well be thought to be thoroughly impregnable, and still more for the precise and complete fulfilment of those prophecies, but that they emanated from Him who is omnipresent in all *time* as well as in all *space*, and orders all things after the counsel of His own will.

Suffer me, in conclusion, to remind you, how forcibly our subject teaches us the lesson, that neither the wisdom nor the strength nor the riches of a nation will be of any value to secure its stability, if God's favour be wanting. And the greater the blessings enjoyed by it, the more severe apparently are the judgments with which its sins are visited. "When the whole earth rejoiceth," said God against Edom, "I will make thee desolate."

Its wisdom, its power, its wealth, had all been misused, and therefore the Divine word went forth against it, and all these instruments of prosperity were at once powerless to avert the threatened doom.

Nor let us lose sight of the fact of our own similar position as individuals. We must not so *generalize* the lesson taught us, that we forget to apply it to our own case. And therefore I would close all with the expressive Divine warning, addressed, through the prophet Jeremiah, to every individual of mankind,—“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” (Jer. ix. 23, 24.)



## SERMON IV.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, February 4th, 1855.)

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JER. LI. 60—64.

*“So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off; that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.”*

AMONG the prophecies relating to the ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, into the fulfilment of which we are now inquiring, none are more remarkable than those which concern the far-famed city of Babylon, and the kingdom called by its name. The evidence afforded by the fulfilment of a prophecy to the truth of a revelation with which it is connected, is precisely in proportion to the *particularity* of its details, the *improbability* of the events predicted, and the *exactness* of the fulfilment. In all these respects

the prophecies respecting Babylon have a peculiar claim upon our attention.

Let us suppose the case of a great city, the capital of a powerful kingdom, fortified with such consummate skill as to be considered impregnable. Let us imagine a prophecy to be delivered as from God, announcing the very *name* of its conqueror about a century before his *birth*, as well as the particular circumstances which should lead to and attend the capture of the city, together with various notices of its subsequent history up to the period of its complete ruin and desolation. Let us suppose another prophet, at a distance of seventy years previous to the events predicted, uttering similar premonitions, and fixing the precise *period* at which the capture was to be accomplished. And then let us conceive the *exact accomplishment* of all these predicted events precisely as foretold. Could we hesitate for a moment as to the source from which these prophecies emanated? “I am God,” saith Jehovah, “and there is none like me ; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” (Is. xlv. 9, 10.) And this prerogative he frequently challenges for his own exclusive possession ; as in another passage of the prophet Isaiah, which I will quote from the translation of Bishop Lowth :—“Thus saith Jehovah, the king of Israel ; and his Redeemer, Jehovah God of hosts : I am the first, and I am the last ; and beside me there is no God. And who is like me, that He should call forth this event, and make it known beforehand, and dispose it for me, from the time that I appointed the people of the destined age? The



things that are now coming, and are to come hereafter, let them declare unto us. Fear ye not, neither be ye afraid : have I not declared it unto you from the first? Yea, I have foreshown it : and ye are my witnesses." (Is. xlv. 6—8.)

Now, the prophecies relating to Babylon and their accomplishment are exactly such as I have just described ; as I shall now proceed to show.

The kingdom of Babylon took its rise about 747 years previous to the Christian era, and, notwithstanding its wealth and power, lasted only 209 years, when its capital was taken by Cyrus, and it became part of the great Persian Empire founded by that monarch ; and the mighty Babylon by degrees dwindled away to that predicted state of ruin and desolation in which it is now found. In less than forty years from the time of its first establishment, and more than 150 years previous to that of its overthrow, the prophet Isaiah was directed to deliver the following premonitions of the fate that awaited it.

The first prediction was a *general* announcement of its approaching ruin, in which, after giving a summary description of the calamities that should befall the Babylonians, the prophet specifies the *nation* by whom they were to be first subdued, and the *state* to which the city should be *ultimately* reduced. "Behold I will stir up *the Medes* against them, which shall not regard silver ; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. . . . And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from genera-

tion to generation : neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there : neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces ; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." (Is. xiii. 17—22.)

In about 150 years from this time an army of Medes and Persians, with their confederates, under the command of the representative of the king of Media, captured Babylon, and put an end to the Babylonish empire, after it had lasted little more than two hundred years ; so "near to come" was "her time," and so little prolonged her days ; and from the state to which Babylon was then reduced by the spoliation of the invading army, and by the alteration of the course of the great river Euphrates, which ran through it, it never recovered, but gradually sank into the state described in the prophecy. It was not reduced immediately upon its capture to this state. Nor are we thus to understand the words of the prophecy. We have already observed that predictions referring to events far distant from one another are often intermixed in the same prophecy. Many years elapsed after its first capture before its state became such as is here described. And in fact it may be doubted whether some parts of this prophecy have ever yet received their full and final accomplishment. Its capture by Cyrus was the commencement of its ruin. But what revivals of its prosperity might be permitted,



before its final reduction to that state of desolation from which there was to be no recovery, is not announced. The language of prophecy in such cases is intentionally, and for a wise end, obscure. But enough has been fulfilled to show the source from which the prophecy proceeded. For there are certain remarkable and definite predictions in it which have been fulfilled to the letter.

For the prophet proceeds to give certain clear and circumstantial accounts of events that were to happen to the then powerful but foredoomed city. He gives the very *name* of the conqueror before whom it was to fall, and the peculiar circumstances attending its capture by him :—

“ Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him ; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates ; and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight : I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron : and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name : I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.” (Is. xlv. 1—4.)

Thus was Cyrus, long before his birth, marked out as the appointed instrument for fulfilling God’s designs on the wicked and idolatrous Babylonians. Before

him the Armenians, the Egyptians, the Lydians, and many other powerful nations, were, as it was here prophesied, “subdued;” and he was enabled to devote the whole strength of his army to the task of besieging the capital of the Babylonish kingdom; and then took place the fulfilment of the most remarkable part of this prophecy, that he should enter the city through *open* gates, and that the two-leaved gates of the Royal Palace should be opened before him by kings. Events more *unlikely* to come to pass could hardly be conceived. The fulfilment is so well known, that I need not dwell long upon it. Having turned the course of the river Euphrates, which ran through the city, he entered with his army the dry channel of the river on the night when a great festival was being celebrated; and in consequence of the whole city being given up to revelry, found the *gates* leading from the river to the city *open*, and having passed on to the Royal Palace, and slain the guards before the gates, the king, who was feasting within, surrounded by captive kings and princes, and all the nobles of his court, sent some of them to ascertain the cause of the disturbance; who having opened before Cyrus the two-leaved gates, the soldiers of Cyrus rushed in and slew the king and his attendant princes and nobles in the midst of their carousal.\*

It seems impossible to conceive a prophecy that should enter into more precise particularity of detail than this. It is no vague announcement of calamities such as might be likely to befall any state in the course

\* See Note A. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.



of time, but a specific prediction of circumstances and events which no anticipatory conjectures could have reached.

These prophecies of Isaiah were followed, in the course of a few years, by similar predictions from the prophet Jeremiah.

In the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, when that city was just about to become the wonder of the whole earth for its extent, its strength, and its wealth, the prophet Jeremiah was commissioned to announce the *precise date* of its downfall, and to fix for that event a time not far distant. After predicting the victories of Nebuchadnezzar over all the Eastern nations, including his own people the Jews, and that the kings of Babylon should rule over them for seventy years, he adds the announcement,—“And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations; and I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it.” (Jer. xxv. 12, 13.)

To the fore-announcement of the name of its conqueror was now added a premonition of the exact period of its fall; and at the time predicted this event took place. From its effects it has never yet recovered, and the ultimate result was to be “perpetual desolation,” to the truth of which, even if there should be any temporary revival of it, future ages must be left to bear their witness.

But the prophet was instructed to add *various par-*

*ticulars* relating to the *circumstances* that should lead to and accompany this event; and a more graphic description of some of the circumstances of the siege than that which is given by the prophet, it would be difficult to find in any history of the event written after it had occurred.

The capture was to be effected by means of some stratagem that should take the city by surprise. "I have laid a snare for thee," said God by the prophet, "and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art found and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord." (Jer. l. 24.) "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed." (Jer. li. 8.) "How is Sheshach taken, and how is the praise of the whole earth *surprised!*" (Jer. li. 41.)

Had the besieged been aware of the designs of Cyrus, remarks the ancient heathen historian who gives an account of its capture, they might have easily frustrated them, but "the Persians took them by *surprise*; and from the extent of the city, as the inhabitants themselves affirm, they who lived in the extremities were made prisoners, while those living in the centre of the place, ignorant of this, were dancing and feasting."\*

"The mighty men of Babylon," it is added, "have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women. They have burned her dwelling places; her bars are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that

\* See Note B. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.



the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.” (Jer. li. 30—32.)

Two remarkable circumstances at once strike the mind in this account; one, that such celebrated warriors as must then have been in Babylon should make no effort for the preservation of the city: the other, that the messengers communicating to the king the intelligence of its capture, should run so as to meet one another as men coming from opposite quarters. But so it happened in both respects.

It is a matter of history, that the Babylonians, fearing to meet the forces of Cyrus in the field, after their first discomfiture, shut themselves up in the city; they “remained in their holds.”\*

Moreover the forces of Cyrus entering the city at the two opposite extremities, where the bed of the river *reached*, and where it *quitted* the wall of the city, the messengers that hastened to the Royal Palace in the centre ran so as to “meet one another” in carrying the tidings.†

The other details were more in accordance with the probabilities of the case, but were all precisely fulfilled.

They were to be caught also, the prophet declared, in a drunken revel. “In their heat I will make their feasts” (or, rather, “I will supply them with drink”), “and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith the Lord. I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter.” “And I will make drunk her

\* See Note C. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

† See Note D. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

princes and her wise men, her captains and her rulers and her mighty men ; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts." (Jer. li. 39, 40, 57.)

"Being a day of festivity amongst them" when the city was taken, the great historian of antiquity tells us, "the inhabitants were engaged in dancing and merriment." It was a festival, says another historian, "in which all the Babylonians drank and revelled the whole night."\*

Of the proceedings of that night in the Royal Palace of Babylon, the prophet Daniel, himself a spectator, has given us a more full account. Careless in their fancied security, the king and all his princes and nobles were gathered together in the Palace, to pass the night in revelry. Even the captured vessels of God's sanctuary had been brought out to serve the purposes of the feast ; and as the prophet says, "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone." (Dan. v. 3, 4.) And in the same hour came the handwriting on the wall, announcing to the affrighted monarch his approaching fate ; the just punishment, as the prophet reminded him, of his rebellion against God ; the God who had revealed himself by such signal manifestations of His power to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. "Thou hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven ; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, . . . and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, &c. . . and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." And thus

\* See Note E. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.



was this whole assembly of the king and his nobles surprised that very night in this defenceless state; “brought down,” as the prophecy graphically expresses it, “like lambs to the slaughter;”—“one,” as an ancient historian describes it, “holding up something before him, another flying, and another defending himself in whatever way he could;”\*—and left to “sleep a perpetual sleep.”

“She hath been proud against the Lord,” adds the prophet, “against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord.” “Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets.” “All her slain shall fall in the midst of her.” (Jer. l. 29, 30; li. 4, 47.)

Cyrus, his historian tells us, “sent troops of horsemen up and down through the streets, ordering them to kill those that they found abroad.”† And thus all her slain fell in the midst of her; caught in a defenceless state in the midst of the city, and slaughtered, not in battle, but as fugitives “thrust through in her streets.”

If time permitted, many more instances of the way in which the minute details of these predictions were fulfilled, might easily be adduced. But enough have been mentioned to show the real character of the prophecy, and with this only are we now concerned.

But, as we have before had occasion to observe, the prophecies relating to such events are scarcely ever fulfilled in all their parts at the same time. The *final*

\* See Note F. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

† See Note G. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

judgments of God do not fall upon a nation or city at the period of the *first* visitation. The kingdom of Babylon, indeed, was at once brought to an end on the capture of the city by Cyrus, and the city itself was greatly injured, but its walls and gates were left standing. The remaining parts of the prophecy, however, were gradually fulfilled, as time advanced, until its state became one of complete desolation.

Thus, the city rebelling against Darius, the successor of Cyrus, Babylon was captured a second time, and then, as the great historian of antiquity tells us, the walls were levelled and the gates taken away.\* And thus was that part of the prophecy fulfilled: "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire." (Jer. li. 58.)

At various subsequent periods Babylon again became a prey to its enemies. By some it was despoiled of the treasures of its temples, according to the prediction, "I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he has swallowed up." By others its idols were taken away, according as it was said, "I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon." By others its inhabitants were reduced to slavery, as it was said, "Take the millstones and grind meal." And thus did it gradually sink into the state in which it is now found.

And now, finally, let us briefly inquire what that state is, and we shall find that the word of prophecy has accurately described it.

"Babylon," it was prophesied, "shall become heaps." And it is described as "a vast succession of

\* See Note H. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.



mounds of rubbish." It was to be "pools of water;" and from the occasional overflowing of the Euphrates, the spaces between the mounds, and the excavations made by the Arabs and others in their digging for treasures, have become permanent pools of water.

"Wild beasts of the desert" were to "lie there," and "their houses" to be "full of doleful creatures." And the mounds under which the ruins of Babylon's houses and temples lie are described as being full of holes, the resort of lions and wild beasts of every kind.

In short, we need only compare the accounts given by impartial spectators of the scene of desolation which marks the site of this "glory of kingdoms and beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," with the prophetic announcements of the fate that awaited it, to see that its present state has been exactly predicted.\*

But it must be added, with respect to Babylon, as in the case of Jerusalem, that intermixed with these predictions are others that seem yet to await their full accomplishment.

I shall not attempt exactly to draw the line between the predictions that have been clearly accomplished, and those whose fulfilment is yet future or controverted. But that some of them refer to a future period must, I think, be admitted.

Some of the predictions, indeed, respecting the destruction of Babylon connect it so intimately with the deliverance hereafter to be vouchsafed to the Jewish nation, that it has been supposed that a future restoration and final destruction yet await it. On this

\* See Note I. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

supposition, however, as not within the limits of our present subject, I will say nothing. But it will offer no contradiction to the language of prophecy if there should be a temporary revival of Babylon succeeded by a final overthrow. This would be quite in accordance with the character of the word of prophecy, which often gives in a brief and continuous narrative the whole series of events that are to happen to the subject of the prophecy at various periods to the end of time.\*

And now, in conclusion, let us notice one or two points connected with our present subject, which may bring before us its moral aspect.

Why were all these judgments inflicted upon Babylon? Among the reasons assigned, these three are prominent: its pride, its sensuality, and its idolatry. (See Is. xlvi. and xlvii.)

But there is another, which I notice more especially as showing the Divine superintendence over the affairs of men, and God's regard for his true worshippers, even while his chastisements are upon them,—and that is, its cruelty to the Jews. “I was wroth with my people,” saith God by his prophet Isaiah, “I have polluted my inheritance, and given them into thine hand: *thou didst show them no mercy*: upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.” (Is. xlvii. 6.) And again, by his prophet Jeremiah,—“The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will plead thy

\* See Note K. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.



cause, and take vengeance for thee." (Jer. li. 35, 36.) The Babylonians, though employed by God Himself as His instruments for the punishment of the Jewish people for their wickedness, had indulged in cruelties and acts of oppression towards them, for which they themselves were now to suffer.

Even in the execution of God's righteous judgments, it is the duty of man to show mercy to his fellow-man, and not to triumph over and oppress those whom the providence of God may have placed in his power. We here see, that acts of oppression and cruelty, even though their objects may be those who are under God's penal inflictions, will be visited by Him with proportionate chastisement.

And one great object for which Cyrus was upheld and prospered by the Divine hand, was, that he might be the deliverer of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. "For Jacob my servant's sake I have called thee by thy name." "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer . . . . I am the Lord that maketh all things, &c., that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid . . . . I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." (Is. xlv. 24, 28; xlv. 13.)

The fulfilment of this purpose by Cyrus is a matter of history. And we learn from it, how the mercy and loving-kindness of God are exhibited towards those upon whom His judgments have had a salutary effect;

as we have reason to suppose was the case with the Jewish captives in Babylon. For, in the prophecy of Jeremiah relating to this event, we find, in the midst of it, the following prediction:—"In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." (Jer. l. 4, 5.)

When they were brought to this state of mind, *then* their deliverance came; then it was that Cyrus, raised up by God for this especial purpose, appeared for the overthrow of their oppressors, and their liberation from the yoke of bondage. Unconscious himself of the nature of his mission, or by whose power he was upheld, he fulfilled the counsels of the Divine mind, and carried into effect God's purposes of mercy towards His people, His true worshippers.

How little are even the greatest of mankind often aware of the objects they are unconsciously accomplishing! And how forcibly does the case of Babylon show us, how, amidst all the contentions of man, the collisions of the mightiest nations on earth, the fall of empires, the struggles for dominion that seem to shake the world, *the purposes of God* (which are often the *last* things which enter into the calculations of the actors in such events) are being silently accomplished—purposes of *mercy* towards His true worshippers, of *judgment* towards transgressors.

It should also be remarked, how exactly the cha-



racter and acts of Cyrus, as given by the heathen historian of his life, agree with the Divine record, that though he did not know the true God, yet he was raised up in righteousness, and that his ways were directed by God. The character given of him by this writer shows, that, so far as his knowledge extended, he was pre-eminently distinguished for virtue and philanthropy.

“He reckoned,” it is said, “that he himself was to manifest the same exercise of virtue [with those under him]; for he thought it was not possible that one who was not himself what he ought to be, should incite others to great and good actions.” “He judged that if all his companions were religious, they would be the less inclined to be guilty of anything impious towards each other, or towards him.” “And he thought that he should the better inspire all others with respect and awe, if he himself appeared to pay so great a respect to all, as never to say or do anything shameful.” “He thought likewise that men would be best induced to practise a command of their passions, if he showed that *he himself* was not drawn away by present pleasures from the pursuit of good objects: but that he preferred toil and labour, with a noble object in view, before all delights.”\* His great characteristics, in short, appear to have been freedom from selfishness, patriotism, self-control, and indifference to wealth; united with vigilant attention to all the duties to which his office called him.

And surely the example of this noble heathen speaks a lesson to *us* who possess light and knowledge and

\* See Note L. to Sermon iv. in Appendix.

privileges so superior to what were enjoyed by him. Redeemed by the blood of God's own Son, and having *Him* for our example who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and whom we have covenanted to follow, what a responsibility rests upon us to walk worthy of our high vocation!

And so completely had Cyrus instilled his own indifference to wealth into the minds of his principal followers, that we find in their conduct, as recorded by the heathen historians, a striking exemplification of the truth of the prophecy we have cited in one of its most remarkable features, namely, that they should not regard silver, and as for gold they should not delight in it.

The purposes of God are seldom accomplished by weak and incompetent agents. All the successes of Cyrus, though due primarily to the Divine will, were, in their practical accomplishment, the result of the vigilance and ability displayed in the efforts made to obtain them. And nothing can more clearly show than such cases, that even where we have reason to expect the blessing of God upon our efforts, success can only be looked for in connexion with the diligent use of means, and perseverance in the midst of many difficulties and disappointments. For two whole years the army of Cyrus laboured in vain in their attempts to take Babylon.

But it must never be forgotten, that what is accomplished is due to the Divine blessing upon our labours. Even the wrath of man works but the purposes of His will. For "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What dost thou?" (Dan. iv. 35.)



## SERMON V.

*(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, December 2nd, 1855.)*

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ISAIAH XXIII. 8, 9.

*“Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth? The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.”*

PROCEEDING with our investigation of the prophecies relating to the history of various ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, I have on the present occasion to call your attention to those relating to the far-famed city of Tyre.

The words of our text were uttered by the prophet Isaiah at a time when Tyre was one of the most powerful, wealthy, and flourishing cities in the world, and capable of defence to such an extent, that, when besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, it resisted for thirteen years the whole forces of his empire. The prophecy contained in this passage and the subsequent verses, which describes the nature of its fate, and also some points in its subsequent history, was delivered nearly a century and a half before the occurrence of the first event which it predicts, and at a time when the Chaldean kingdom, which afterwards rose to such a height

of greatness under Nebuchadnezzar, was in its earliest infancy, and in subjection to the Assyrians. But to that kingdom was the task distinctly assigned by the prophet of effecting the overthrow of Tyre, as we read in verse 13, which I quote from the more correct translation of Bishop Lowth. "Behold the land of the Chaldeans: This people was of no account. (The Assyrian founded it for the inhabitants of the desert; they raised the watch-towers, they set up the palaces thereof) [alluding to the way in which Babylon was first built by a king of Assyria as a settled abode for the Chaldeans, who were then a barbarous people wandering about the country without any fixed habitation]. This people [adds the prophet] hath reduced her to a ruin."

He speaks of the destruction of Tyre at least 130 years before the event, as an accomplished fact, and he specifies the nation by whom the work was to be fulfilled. In the eye of Him who sees all things from the beginning, and calleth those things which be not as though they were, it was as if it had already taken place.

And we may here observe, that the destruction of Tyre had been predicted, in general terms, at least seventy years before, by the prophet Amos. "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant: but I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof." (Amos i. 9, 10.)

These prophecies of Amos and Isaiah were after-



wards confirmed and enlarged by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jer. xxv.; Ezek. xxvi.—xxviii.), particularly the latter, at a period nearer the time of the commencement of their fulfilment, but not so near as to take away their prophetical character.

The prophecy as delivered by Ezekiel commences thus, according to the translation of Bishop Newcome:—"The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying; Son of man, because Tyre hath said against Jerusalem, 'Aha, she is broken; the merchandise of the people is turned unto me; she that was full is become desolate;' therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Lo, I am against thee, O Tyre; and I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up: and they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and throw down her towers: and I will scrape off her earth from her, and I will make her like the top of a rock. She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah." (Ezek. xxvi. 1—5.)

And the prophet then proceeds to point out Nebuchadnezzar by name as about to besiege Tyre and to effect its overthrow, giving various details respecting the wealth and luxury of the Tyrians, and the nature of the fate that awaited them.

Now, as it respects such well-known events as the siege and capture of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, I need not stop to prove, by quotations from ancient authors, that this prediction was fully accomplished. After a siege of almost unexampled duration, lasting for thirteen years, Tyre fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, and of that part which formed the original

city, and was then destroyed, not a vestige remains. Of continental Tyre, we are told by an accurate observer on the spot, “no known vestige now remains.”\*

But for the correct interpretation of the various prophecies concerning Tyre, we must bear in mind, that there was an Old and a New Tyre, the latter having succeeded to the former, not altogether on the same site, but sufficiently nearly so to cause them both to be spoken of in the same prophecy by the same name some portions of the prophecy relating to Old and others to New Tyre.

Old Tyre, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, was a city on the sea-coast, but connected with an island about half a mile from the shore, which had become even then an important part of Tyre, where also was an ancient temple dedicated to Hercules.†

And when Old Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, many of the inhabitants fled to this island, besides those who passed over to Carthage and more distant places, carrying their treasures with them.

Though, therefore, the original Tyre was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, yet a remnant of the city was left in that neighbouring island, which had originally formed but a suburb, as it were, of the city, and here, according to the prophetic announcement of Isaiah, Tyre, at the appointed time, revived.

Its revival was thus predicted by the prophet Isaiah. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years

\* See Note A. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

† See Note B. to Sermon v. in Appendix.



shall Tyre sing, &c. . . . It shall come to pass, after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire," &c. (Is. xxiii. 15—17.)

The remnant of the Tyrians that remained on the island submitted, as it appears, to be under the dominion of Nebuchadnezzar,\* and, in the language of the prophet, were "forgotten," as a handful of people of no account in the world. But at the end of seventy years, soon after the Babylonish empire had been put an end to by Cyrus, the Tyrians, with many other nations, regained their liberty and independence, and from that period New Tyre, confining itself, apparently, for safety to the island, commenced a course of prosperity in which it seems fully to have rivalled, if not exceeded, the fame of the elder city.†

For of *this* city it was that Zechariah spoke when he said, "Tyrus did build herself a stronghold, and *heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets*. Behold the Lord will cast her out, and He will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire." (Zech. ix. 3, 4.)

And to this city probably belongs more especially that remarkable description of the incalculable wealth and luxury, and consequent pride and arrogance, of Tyre recorded in Ezek. xxvii. & xxviii., where it is said, "When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise." (Ezek. xxvii. 33.)

\* See Note C. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

† See Note D. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

And to this abundant wealth was added extraordinary wisdom. "Behold," says the prophet, "thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: with thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches. . . . By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches." (Ezek. xxviii. 3—5.) "Thou sealest up the sum; full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. . . . Every precious stone was thy covering." (vv. 12, 13.)

One point more in its history Isaiah was commissioned to predict, namely, that there should be a period when, notwithstanding its previous wickedness, "her merchandise and her hire should be holiness to the Lord, it shall not be treasured, nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing." (verse 18.)

This prediction was very fully accomplished in New Tyre in the times of the primitive Christian Church.

The seeds of that abundant harvest that was afterwards gathered there appear to have been sown by our Blessed Lord himself, who came "into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon," (Matt. xv. 21 et seq.) and many, we are told, came to Him from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases. (Luke vi. 17.) And when St. Paul visited Tyre, he found disciples in the city, and tarried with them seven days. (Acts xxi. 3, 4.)

And such deep root did the faith of Christ take even in Tyre, that in the time of the persecution by Diocletian many of the most illustrious of the con-



fessors and martyrs of that period were from the city of Tyre ; and after it had ceased, a temple was erected by the Christians of Tyre for the worship of God of the most magnificent and sumptuous kind. The Fathers therefore of the fourth century bore witness to the complete fulfilment of this prophecy. “ We see it fulfilled,” says Eusebius, in his commentary on the passage, “ in our time. For since a Church of God has been founded in Tyre, as well as in other nations, many of its gains, obtained by merchandise, are consecrated to the Lord, being offered to His Church, the gainers offering them as an act of religion.”\*

And so Jerome expounds the words,—“ We may behold Christian churches built in Tyre ; we may see the riches of all, that they are not laid up, nor treasured, but are given to those who dwell before the Lord.”†

Tyre therefore became the first archbishopric under the Patriarchate of ~~Jerusalem~~<sup>Antioch</sup>, having a considerable province, with thirteen suffragan bishops placed under it.‡

And before I pass on, I would point attention to the remarkable illustration which we have, in the way in which this prediction is connected with the other part of the prophecy in Isaiah, of the juxta-position of predictions of events far distant from one another. The prediction of which I have just been speaking follows immediately after the prediction of the revival of Tyre seventy years after its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, though many centuries intervened be-

\* See Note E. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

† See Note F. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

‡ See Note G. to Sermon v in Appendix.

tween the two. "It shall come to pass, after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, &c., and her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord," &c. Various events in the history of Tyre were revealed simultaneously to the mind of the prophet, and he foretold them as they were presented to him. But the details of time and circumstances were not added. And hence it may be seen how great the difficulty of conjecturing beforehand the mode in which the predictions of the prophets are likely to be fulfilled. For no previous anticipations would have made several centuries intervene between two predictions so placed together. In fact, the whole of these prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel respecting Tyre are marked by this characteristic, placing together events in the history of Old and New Tyre far distant from one another. But it must be remembered, that the prophecies were not intended to enable man to foresee with precision the exact history of the subject of the prophecy, but partly to give a *general* warning, and partly to bear testimony, on their full accomplishment, to the power and prescience of God, and the Divine origin of God's revealed word.

Of the history of Tyre after its capture by Nebuchadnezzar the prophet Isaiah says but little. Not so, however, the prophet Ezekiel. For we find in his prophecy clear notices of many subsequent events. According to the usual custom observed in the Divine predictions, his prophecy consists partly of statements that refer to its first overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar, and partly of others, that relate to *subsequent* events, that carried on the Divine purposes to their complete fulfilment.



Scarcely any of the Divine judgments upon the ancient kingdoms of the earth assumed, on their first infliction, their final form ; but fell by degrees, according as the Divine forbearance saw fit, until at last they were completed.

The prophecy of Ezekiel *includes* the subsequent history of Tyre in its new form, even to the period of its final overthrow.

Thus the prophet Ezekiel predicts—"I will cause *many* nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up." (xxvi. 3.)

Remarkably descriptive are these words of the various successive overthrows of this devoted city, after its several revivals ; as the rock over which the sea pours its successive waves alternately lifts its head and then disappears, as they rise and fall, until its foundations themselves are loosened, and it sinks to rise no more.

A rapid survey of the history of Tyre will enable us better to appreciate this description. As Old Tyre was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, so New Tyre was taken and set fire to by Alexander under circumstances clearly referred to in the prophecy of Ezekiel. But after this overthrow New Tyre speedily revived ; for in less than twenty years' time it withstood the fleets and armies of Antigonus, and sustained a siege of fifteen months before it was taken.\* It afterwards passed into the hands alternately of the kings of Egypt and the kings of Syria, until it fell under the dominion of the Romans. In the year 639 of the Christian era it was taken by the Saracens ; retaken

\* See Note H. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

by the Christians in the year 1124, from whom it was captured in 1291 by the Mamelukes of Egypt, who razed it to its foundations; and from them the poor remains of New Tyre passed, in 1516, into the hands of the Turks, with whom they have remained. And the description given of them by an eye-witness a few years since is,—“Tyre has indeed become ‘like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon.’ (Ezek. xxvi. 14.) The sole remaining tokens of her more ancient splendour lie strewed beneath the waves in the midst of the sea; and the hovels which now nestle upon a portion of her site present no contradiction of the dread decree: ‘Thou shalt be built no more.’ ”\*

Thus accurately was fulfilled the prediction, “I will cause *many* nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up”—one succeeding another in effecting the work of destruction, until its final condition becomes precisely what was foretold,—“I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon.”

Again, it is said in the prophecy of Ezekiel, “They shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.” (xxvi. 12.)

Now, under ordinary circumstances, there could be no probability of a conqueror laying, *i.e.* deliberately placing, the stones and the timber and even the dust of a conquered city in the midst of the sea. But so it happened to Old Tyre; for when New Tyre was besieged by Alexander, in order to enable his army to approach the wall of the city, he made a causeway

\* See Note I. to Sermon v. in Appendix.



from the continent to the island by laying in the water the ruins of Old Tyre; and these not sufficing, he added to them the earth on which it had been built.\* Tyre therefore henceforth was no longer insular.

Thus precisely does the prophetic word fore-announce even the *details* of the way in which the Divine judgments are to be executed.

It is also stated by Ezekiel and Zechariah, that the city was to be destroyed by fire. “I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.” (xxviii. 18.) The Lord, said Zechariah, “will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire.” (ix. 4.)

This was fulfilled in New Tyre by Alexander, who set fire to the city, not in the course of the siege, but afterwards, by directing fire to be thrown into the houses;† so that the fire came forth from the midst of her.

One more particular must be noticed. After the conquest of the city, among other cruelties perpetrated by Alexander in consequence of the protracted defence made by the inhabitants, thirty thousand of them were sold for slaves.‡

Thus remarkably was fulfilled that prophecy of Joel against Tyre, uttered more than two centuries previously:—“Because ye have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things: the children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians,

\* See Note K. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

† See Note L. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

‡ See Note M. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

that ye might remove them far from their border : behold I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head ; and I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off : for the Lord hath spoken it." (Joel iii. 5—8.)

How precisely its present state accords with the prophetic description, that it should be like the top of a rock, a place for the spreading of nets, in the midst of the sea, I have already shown from the account given of it by an eye-witness who visited its site only a few years ago. And thus it seems to have reached that state of final desolation that will bear witness to the truth of the prophetic denunciation "and never shalt thou be any more." (Ezek. xxvii. 36 ; xxviii. 19.)\*

To the complete fulfilment of the prophecy we have the testimony even of an infidel visitor, who confesses—"the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and the Mahometans have accomplished this prediction."†

But the sole question with which we are concerned is that of its *fulfilment*, which is here admitted.

It remains only, that I should briefly direct your attention to the practical lessons which the example of Tyre speaks to other nations.

The *reasons* for the Divine judgments that befel her are very clearly stated by the prophets. The prophecy of Amos intimates, as we have seen, that there

\* See Note N. to Sermon v. in Appendix.

† See Note O. to Sermon v. in Appendix.



were *four* transgressions, for which God would “not turn away the punishment thereof.” He does not enumerate them, but He mentions as *one*, that “they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant;” alluding apparently to their treatment of some of the Jews who had fallen into their hands at the time of a national calamity, in violation of the league made between Hiram king of Tyre and Solomon. (1 Kings v. 12.)

Similar conduct was, as we have seen, pointed out by Joel as one reason for their punishment, and *their* sale of Jewish captives was to be recompensed by a similar infliction upon themselves by Alexander.

The inhabitants of Tyre are in Psalm lxxxiii. reckoned with the Philistines and all the other inveterate enemies of Israel. And the cause of this enmity appears to have been *jealousy* and *selfish love of gain*, as is clearly pointed out in the prophecy of Ezekiel: “Son of man, because Tyre hath said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha, she is broken; the merchandise of the people is turned unto me; she that was full is become desolate:’ therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Lo, I am against thee, O Tyre!” (xxvi. 2, 3.)

How striking a proof does this afford us, that such sins draw down national judgments; and that if the great majority of a nation, or a nation by its public acts, transgresses against God, that people will suffer, *as a people*, the punishment due to the sin.

Nor must we fail to remark, how observant is the eye of God of other sins than those of open violence and injustice. He marks the way in which the Tyrian merchant exults over the calamities of others,

as bringing more traffic to himself, and He says "Therefore I am against thee, O Tyre."

The Divine word is,—“He that is greedy of gain [does not enrich, but] troubleth his own house,” and “he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished;” and thus is it fulfilled.

And in this case again should we observe, as we have already had occasion to do in others, how the Divine judgments followed, as it was predicted they should do, those who persecuted and oppressed the Jewish nation. Where are now any of the ancient enemies of the Jews? The Assyrians, the Babylonians, Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines and the inhabitants of Tyre—all have perished. They have been swept as dung from the face of the earth. Their memorials have almost perished with them. But the Jewish nation, amidst all the efforts made by man at various times to root it out from the earth, remains unmixed as ever with the other nations of the world; remains in the state in which the Divine word of prophecy *foretold* that they should be found at this period of the world's history; and remains to fulfil that destiny to which the same word points as yet to be accomplished in them.

Another reason assigned is their *pride*.

Their heart was lifted up, as the prophet Ezekiel says, because of their riches and their beauty; so that they acted as if they were independent of God. (Ezek. xxviii. 2, 5, 17.) And therefore, as our text expresses it, the Lord of hosts decreed their destruction, “to stain the pride of all glory.”

Such is the end of that self-exalting spirit which is



generally the consequence of the possession of wealth and power. It is too often forgotten, that riches and strength are the gifts of God, given and taken away at His pleasure. But vain man, when surrounded with an abundance of these gifts, can hardly realize the idea, that his tenure of them depends every moment upon the sovereign will of God. Thus it was with Nebuchadnezzar himself, the conqueror of Tyre. "Is not this great Babylon," said the proud monarch, "which I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty." And while the word of this proud boast was yet in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven which proclaimed to him, that all his earthly glory had departed from him, and in the same hour was that word fulfilled. (Dan. iv. 29 et seq.)

Another reason assigned was their wickedness.

"By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God." (xxviii. 16.)

Here is another consequence of the possession of unbounded wealth by a nation. Far from leading to a state of happy contentedness and peace between man and man, it often stirs up strife and contention, violence and injustice. And when it results in such issues, and is not used in the fear of God, the hand that gave it takes it away, and punishes those who have thus abused the Divine gifts.

And in these words we see, as I conceive, an allusion to what was *another reason* for the fate to which Tyre was ultimately reduced,—“I will cast thee as

profane out of the mountain of God;" which is still more clearly expressed in the 18th verse: "Through the multitude of thine iniquities, by the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries."

They had been admitted, then, to what the prophet figuratively calls "the mountain of God," and they had a "sanctuary" to be "profaned."

This part of the prophecy therefore alludes, there can be little doubt, to the period when Tyre was a Christian city. And a previous verse confirms this view. "I made thee as the anointed covering Cherub; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou didst remain amidst the stones of fire:" alluding apparently to the twelve stones on the breast-plate of the Jewish High Priest, representing the twelve tribes, which shone like fire; and figuratively expressing their interest in the work of the Great Mediator before the throne above.

These expressions can hardly refer to *heathen* Tyre, but may well be applied to that city of the sufferings of whose martyrs Eusebius has left us such a touching account.\*

Here, then, was the crowning sin of Tyre. She had been admitted as a member of the Church of Christ; she had been sanctified by the blood of martyrs; she had seen the effects of true Christian faith in purifying the soul from the debasing effects of the fall, and enabling it to rise superior to all the fascinations of earth, and even to all the weaker feelings of our nature, through that hope full of immortality with which it fills the Christian; she had been, as it were,

\* Note P. to Sermon v. in Appendix.



admitted as one of the stones of fire upon the breast-plate of our great Mediator and Intercessor at the altar of heaven, as one of those for whom He pleaded.

But the pride, the selfishness, the evil passions engendered by the possession of unbounded wealth and power, made her, in the course of a few years, forget, as a nation, all these privileges and blessings, and thus “profane her sanctuary”; and therefore the word went forth, “I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God, and I will destroy thee from amidst the stones of fire.” Thou shalt be no more borne upon the breast of the great High Priest above, as one of those for whom His intercession is offered.

What a lesson does this speak to those who have been equally favoured with the nation of whom the prophet here speaks !

And with this single remark I leave the example of Tyre to your contemplation ; for no words can add force or solemnity to the warning it speaks to the other nations of the earth even to the end of time.

## SERMON VI.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, January 6th, 1856.)

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NAHUM I. 7—10.

*“The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him. But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue His enemies. What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time. For while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.”*

AMONG the prophecies that fore-announced the fate of some of the ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, of which I have already noticed some of the more important, there remains *one more* for our consideration, to which I purpose to devote the present Lecture.

Among the enemies of the Jewish people, the first to whom it was permitted to bring them to the brink of ruin, and to carry a large portion of them into captivity, were the Assyrians, under the guidance of the



king of Nineveh; and among all the kingdoms whose destruction was foretold by the Jewish prophets, they were the first to meet their predicted fate.

The fall of Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, involving the ruin of the Assyrian empire, was predicted by the prophet Nahum more than a century before the event—a prophecy previously delivered in general terms by the prophet Isaiah, and repeated at a time shortly preceding its accomplishment by the prophet Zephaniah.\*

At the time when the prophecies of Nahum and Isaiah were uttered, Nineveh was the capital of the most powerful empire in the world. It appears, from the most authentic accounts we have respecting it in heathen authors, to have been larger than even Babylon itself, and to have fully equalled it in its wealth and magnificence. It is said by the prophet Jonah to have been “an exceeding great city of three days’ journey” (Jonah iii. 3), *i.e.* in circuit; which is confirmed by the testimony of the historian Diodorus Siculus, who states its circuit to have been 480 furlongs, or sixty of our miles; and adds that no one afterwards built such a city, either as to the greatness of the compass, or the magnificence of the walls, which he tells us were 100 feet high, and broad enough for three chariots to run abreast upon them, defended by 1500 towers 200 feet high.† Under ordinary circumstances, its defences were such as to render it, to any means of assault which could *then* be brought against it, impregnable.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel against Egypt, delivered

\* See Note A. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

† See Note B. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

after the fall of Nineveh, and containing a warning derived from its fate, the power and splendour of the Assyrian empire are beautifully represented under the figure of a tree “exalted above all the trees of the field.” “All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations . . . nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty.” (Ezek. xxxi. 5—8.)

At the very time when the Assyrian empire was enjoying this proud pre-eminence among the kingdoms of the earth, the utter and final destruction of its capital, and the consequent ruin of the empire, were foretold in clear and express terms by Nahum and Isaiah.

The prophecy of Isaiah is delivered in more general terms, but such as evidently contain an intimation of some of the peculiar circumstances attending the fall of Nineveh.

Announcing the way in which God, after having used the Assyrian king for “performing his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem,” would punish him for “the glory of his high looks,” and for his proud boast that he had done it by the strength of his hand and by his wisdom; which the prophet compares to the axe boasting itself against him that heweth therewith, or the rod shaking itself against them that lift it up; he proclaims, “Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel



shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; and shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.” (Is. x. 12—18.)

The suddenness of the destruction, the instrument by which it was more immediately accomplished, and the faintness of heart which characterized them at the moment of trial, are here plainly alluded to.

But the prophecy of Nahum contains more *precise* and *striking* notices of the circumstances that were to mark the siege and capture and final destruction of the city.\*

The prophet, after commencing with an exordium pointing out how the mercy and lovingkindness of God are manifested in connexion with His justice and power (of which the case of Nineveh, as I shall presently show, presented a remarkable instance), proceeds to announce some of the circumstances which should characterize the capture of the city:—

“While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.”

It is stated by Diodorus Siculus that it was while the Assyrian army were feasting, and in a state of drunkenness, that their enemies, falling unexpectedly upon them in the night, became masters of the camp, slew many of them, and drove the rest into the city.†

The prophet predicts, — “With an overrunning

\* See Note C. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

† See Note D. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof;" and in the second chapter he adds, "The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." (ii. 6.)

It is stated by Diodorus, that in the third year of the siege, the river, being swollen with continual rains, overflowed part of the city, and broke down the wall for twenty furlongs; and that the king, thinking that an old prophecy, that the city would not be taken till the river became its enemy, was fulfilled, shut himself up, with all his household and his wealth, in his palace, and set fire to it; while the enemy entered in by the breach and took the city.\*

And thus, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, under his glory was the fire kindled; and according to the words of Nahum, "the gates of the rivers were opened, and the palace dissolved."

Notwithstanding, therefore, the almost impregnable defences of the city, these circumstances produced a state of confusion which led to the easy capture of the whole; and thus the prediction of the prophet, remarkable as it would appear to be when it was uttered, "All thy strongholds shall be like fig-trees with the first ripe figs; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater," (Nah. iii. 12,) was completely fulfilled.

By man it would have been supposed, that the defence of a city which was the dwelling place of the greatest warriors of their time, and which is called, in the figurative language of the prophet, in allusion to

\* See Note E. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.



this circumstance, "the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions," would have been obstinate and persevering. But the prescient eye of Him who sees all things from the beginning, foresaw the faintness of heart that at last yielded up the city without a struggle. "Thy people in the midst of thee," says the prophet, "are women." (Nah. iii. 13.)

They were themselves to present another instance of the way in which a people, whom God is visiting with punishment, lose even their peculiar and characteristic attributes. They had been used as the instruments of Divine vengeance on other cities ; and — as the prophet Isaiah once said of their victories over those cities, under their great leader and king Sennacherib,—*because* God had purposed the destruction of those abodes of men under His displeasure, "*therefore* their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded ; they were as the grass of the field and as the green herb," &c. (Is. xxxvii. 27.)

They were now themselves, in their turn, to show the same effects of the Divine indignation against sin. The lion-hearted warriors of Nineveh were to be as women. Their strongholds were to be taken by their enemies with the same facility that the first ripe fruit of the fig-tree is shaken from its branches.

Moreover the destruction was to be complete and final. As the prophet says in our text, the Lord "will make an utter end. Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Or, as he states in a subsequent chapter, "Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp

in the hedges in the cold day; but when the sun ariseth, they flee away, and their place is not known where they are." . . . . "There is no healing of thy bruise, thy wound is grievous." (iii. 19.)

And this was confirmed by the prophet Zephaniah, who announced in very striking terms the nature of the fate that awaited her. The Lord, he says, "will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds; for he shall uncover the cedar-work. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss and wag his head." (Zeph. ii. 13—15.)

And the finality of this destruction is clearly alluded to by the prophet Ezekiel shortly after its occurrence, where, comparing Nineveh to the tree exalted above all the trees of the field, and warning the Egyptians from its fate, he adds, "Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches: to the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height." (Ezek. xxxi. 13, 14.)

Now I need hardly remind you, how completely these prophecies have been fulfilled. For a long period the ruins of this splendid city, the sculptured thresholds, the cedared rooms of her palaces, were the abode of wild beasts and birds of prey; until, in



the lapse of ages, the earth had accumulated over them, so as to leave nothing but bare mounds to show the place which it once occupied. And this took place at so remote a period, that we are told by an author who lived about 1700 years ago, and was the native of a city in a neighbouring country, that in his time “Nineveh was utterly perished, and no trace of it remaining, nor could it be told where it was once situated.”\* Its ruins were so buried, that its site was a matter of conjecture; and accordingly different authors varied in their statements respecting it. In the language of the prophet, its place was not known where it was.

If recent discoveries have cleared up this doubt, the full accomplishment of the prophecy remains undisturbed. And the discoveries which have been made have remarkably tended to confirm the statements of Holy Scripture, both on this and various other points.†

To enter fully into the remarkable character of this prophecy, we must recollect, that this was probably the first instance of the destruction of such a city, and that therefore the circumstances attending its fall had no *parallel* to guide the minds of the prophets to the predictions they uttered respecting it.

Never probably since the beginning of the world had there existed a city or empire of such magnitude, wealth, or power. In the figurative language of the prophet Ezekiel, already quoted, it was a tree to which there was none in the garden of God like unto

\* See Note F. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

† See Note G. to Sermon vi. in Appendix.

it in its beauty. What *man*, however far-seeing, however able to conjecture the probable course of events from acquaintance with the records of preceding times, would have ventured to predict such a fate for such a city and empire—still less to point out any of the peculiar circumstances attending it? For the prophecy was not a mere *general* prediction of its destruction at some future time, but a description of the particular *nature* of that destruction.

And this leads me to remark, that one important proof of the Divine origin of these prophecies relating to the overthrow of the ancient cities and kingdoms of the earth, is to be found in their correspondence with the *various* and *different* circumstances attending the fall of the States to which they refer. They are not confined to mere *generalities*, suitable to the *ordinary* circumstances which might be expected to characterize *all* such events, but they enter into *details*, and fore-announce *peculiar* and *improbable* acts and circumstances, as marking respectively the fate of the various objects of their predictions.

If we compare, for instance, the prophecies relating to Jerusalem, Babylon, Tyre, and Nineveh, we shall find them all more or less distinguished from one another by peculiar circumstances, characteristic of the particular case to which they refer; and those circumstances such as none but a prescient Being could have foreseen.

The case of Nineveh, then, affords us another remarkable instance of the precise fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. We have only given a brief summary of the *leading* points of the evidence



that might be adduced on the subject; but further examination will be found amply to confirm and enlarge the proof we have derived from it.

There remains, however, as in former cases, an important *practical* lesson to be derived from our present subject.

The prophet bears in our text a *double* testimony; in the former part proclaiming God's mercy and goodness; in the latter the execution of His judgment upon the Assyrians.

It had been permitted to the Assyrians to execute a portion of God's threatened punishments even upon His own people the descendants of Abraham. They had been used by Him as His instruments in fulfilling the purposes of His will upon rebellious Israel and Judah. The former they had led into captivity, and destroyed their cities; the latter they had heavily oppressed, and Jerusalem itself had been saved from their hands only by a signal interposition of the Divine hand in answer to the prayer of Hezekiah.

But it was not from any desire to promote the glory of God, or to perform His will, that they fulfilled the mission with which they had been entrusted; for, as God testifies by the prophet Isaiah (x. 5 et seq.), "he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few;" and he ascribed all his victories to his own strength and wisdom.

And therefore, though their acts were in themselves such as God approved, yet the *spirit* in which they

were performed was such as made them amenable to God's just wrath and condemnation. They were done from a desire to increase their own wealth and greatness and dominion, and with a vainglorious ascription of every victory to their own prowess.

How striking a proof, then, have we in their example, that, in the case of *nations* as well as individuals, it is not to the *outward acts*, but to the inward views and feelings of the minds and hearts of men, that God looks as the test of their character; and that it is according to these that He deals with them.

And in a review of the case before us, we must not pass over without notice the particular sins which the prophets point out as those which more especially brought down upon the Assyrians the Divine vengeance.

The prophet Nahum especially notices the *violence* and *falsehood* that prevailed among them. He compares them to the lion tearing in pieces the prey for his whelps and lionesses, and filling his holes with prey. He denounces Nineveh as a city full of lies and robbery, and filled with the spoils of other nations. (Nah. ii. 12; iii. 1 and 19.)

Among other sins is especially noticed their *pride*. Their "heart was lifted up." (Ezek. xxxi. 10.) They placed their sole dependence upon their own strength and wisdom. (Is. x. 13, &c.) And the language of Nineveh "in her heart" was, "I am, and there is none beside me." (Zeph. ii. 15.)

Their pride was such that they "imagined evil against the Lord" (Nah. i. 11); they "reproached the Lord" (Is. xxxvii. 23, 24,) in supposing that they were



able to accomplish their schemes against His servants independently of Him.

This open defiance of God is doubtless confined to the professed unbeliever. But the spirit from which it emanates is one against which we should *all* be on our guard. There is but too often a proud spirit of independence of God which leads us practically to forget that in Him we live and move and have our being; that all our purposes will be fulfilled, or not, precisely according to His will.

Another cause of the downfall of Nineveh was her *idolatry* (Nahum iii. 4—7), for which the prophet Nahum warned her that God was against her; and he proclaims in the name of God, “ Out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image; I will make thy grave, for thou art vile.” (Nah. i. 14.)

There is perhaps no sin more offensive to God, or more sure to bring down upon the offender God’s wrath and indignation, than that of making other beings besides himself, real or imaginary, objects of worship. The punishment may be long delayed—in the case of *individuals* during a long life, in the case of *nations* or *communities* during a period of many centuries, as it was in that of the nations of antiquity, and as we still see to be the case;—but its *ultimate* infliction is certain. It is a sin which includes in itself many different sins, and is one which peculiarly marks the alienation of the natural mind from God. This is more especially the case where it is combined with a knowledge of God’s revealed mind and will in His Holy Scriptures; and hence the prevalence of this

sin among the Jews was spoken of in still stronger terms of reprobation by the ancient prophets than those which they applied to the heathen nations.

How much greater, then, is the guilt, if it should be found in those who enjoy all the additional light afforded us by the Scriptures of the New Testament! To bow down before an image, graven or painted, to pray for help to an angel or departed saint, is as great an insult to the omnipresent God, ever ready to hear and help us, as any offering ever made to the gods of the heathen.

But the case of Nineveh affords us one more important lesson; and that is, that timely repentance is effectual for the turning away of God's wrath and the averting of His threatened judgments.

It will be remembered, that the prophecies which we have just been considering were *preceded* by a solemn warning given to the inhabitants of Nineveh, probably more than a century before, by Jonah, that within forty days Nineveh should be overthrown; accompanied apparently by the intimation that repentance might avail to avert the threatened evil. On this occasion the preaching of Jonah was effectual in humbling their pride and inducing them to seek the mercy of God by repentance and prayer. "The people of Nineveh," we are told, "believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh



by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them; and He did it not." (Jonah iii. 5—10.)

Such is the result of sincere repentance and earnest prayer. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

This is the invariable promise throughout the whole of the word of God. And under the present Dispensation we have evidence that this is the case, far stronger than any which was afforded to those who lived in earlier times. The death of the Son of God upon the cross as a propitiation for the sins of the world, gives us the highest possible assurance of God's readiness to forgive and receive all who come unto Him in the way of his own appointment—that is, as sinners, placing their whole and sole trust and confidence in the atonement and righteousness of Christ. For, as the apostle writes, "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24); and "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe"

(Rom. iii. 22) ; for, as the prophet Isaiah testified, “the Lord is well pleased for *His* righteousness’ sake who hath magnified the law, and made it honourable.” (Is. xlii. 21.)

When we speak of the anger of God against sinners being appeased by the death of Christ, and the Divine wrath turned away by his sufferings, we must of course remember, that we are only endeavouring to describe the acts of God in human language—language inadequate accurately to define it, but nevertheless language which Scripture has considered to be the most suitable to convey to man just notions of the Divine acts. Strictly speaking, we know that God is not subject to like passions with man ; and therefore, when we apply such terms to the acts of God, we are not to understand them exactly in the same sense as if they were used of men. But so long as we remember this, it is no detraction from the infinite mercy and lovingkindness of God to say, that the sufferings of Christ were what made God ready to forgive the sinner ; and that they were a satisfaction to Divine Justice for man’s sin and disobedience : not on account of the sufferings of any of His creatures, still less of His beloved Son, giving any satisfaction or pleasure to the Divine mind (God forbid that we should entertain the thought), but from the moral effect produced by those sufferings, as the endurance of the penalty of sin, upon the whole rational creation, angels as well as men, to whom they ever were, or ever shall become, known. It is difficult to conceive in what way the evil of sin and disobedience to God, and the certainty of its being



followed by punishment, could be more forcibly manifested; while nevertheless the claims of God's Justice and Holiness and immutable Faithfulness to His threatenings as well as promises were at the same time vindicated and satisfied. Here, then, is a reason for the sufferings of Christ, and a reason for viewing those sufferings as the cause of God's readiness to forgive the sinner, which brings all the attributes of God into harmony when He justifies the penitent believer. His justice is not sacrificed to His mercy, nor does His mercy override the claims of justice.

We have a sure foundation, then, upon which to build our hopes when coming to God, in the spirit of penitence and faith, pleading in our behalf, that the penalty for sin has been borne for us, in our place and stead, by His own beloved Son. And I will only now, in conclusion, remind you of the solemn lesson which our Blessed Lord, when upon earth, derived from the very case before us, when he warned the Jews, that even the men of Nineveh would rise up in the judgment against those that received not His message; for "they," said He, "repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here." (Matt. xii. 41.)

## SERMON VII.

*(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, February 3, 1856.)*

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REV. III. 22.

*“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”*

HAVING already brought before you the principal prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the fate of the ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, I now proceed to the consideration of some of those of a similar kind found in the New Testament, relating to events that were to take place in the Christian Church.

And I purpose, on the present occasion, to select for our contemplation the solemn messages sent by our Blessed Lord, through his apostle St. John, to the Seven Churches of Asia. The fulfilment, which we ourselves may see, of the warnings and promises contained in them, gives them an importance which cannot fail to make them objects of the deepest interest to those who desire to become acquainted with the nature of God's acts and dispensations towards His servants. And it is evident, that the great purpose in view in their being left on record, was, the instruc-



tion of the Christian Church throughout the whole period of her course ; for each message is followed by the solemn words I have chosen for our text :—" He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

Bearing in mind the more especial object of these Lectures, I must first proceed to show the way in which the various warnings and promises addressed to these Churches have been fulfilled ; and I shall then point out some of those notices that occur in these addresses which are more especially illustrative of the mode of God's dealings with His Church, and afford matter for our serious self-examination and reflection.

Before I enter upon their consideration, I would premise, that we do not here meet with those definite statements that marked the prophecies we have been hitherto considering ; and consequently the evidence we derive from them on the subject of these Lectures is of a more *limited* kind, and derived principally from the cases of Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, where, the language being more express, the marked difference of their subsequent history is more striking and impressive, and bears upon it a more vivid stamp of God's interference in fulfilment of His threatenings and promises.

The first message is addressed to the Church of Ephesus. It begins with a gracious testimony to its labours, its patience, and its adherence to the truth and rebuke of false teachers. But he who searches the heart, and requires its affections to be fixed upon Himself as the Supreme good, detected what was not perhaps visible to the eye of man. They had "left

their first love." There was not the same zeal and earnestness in the service of God. Whether we are to suppose, that these words refer to the precise time at which the Apostle wrote, or are prophetic of what was subsequently to happen, it is needless to determine. But this is the sin of which it is accused.

And the warning is, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." (Rev. ii. 4, 5.)

The result shows, that this solemn warning was unheeded. And so completely has the candlestick of Ephesus been removed, that for many centuries not one Christian family has existed there. "The desolation," says an unwilling witness to such facts, namely Gibbon, "is complete."\*

The next message is sent to the Church of Smyrna. And to it the encouraging words are addressed,—“I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty; but thou art rich;” and it is exhorted to “fear none of those things which it should suffer,” though it was to be greatly tried; and to be “faithful unto death,” and Christ would give the sufferers “a crown of life.”

To the fulfilment of this prediction of the sufferings that were to befall the Church at Smyrna, we have abundant testimony in the letter addressed by the Christians of Smyrna to the other Christian Churches, giving an account of the martyrdoms that took place

\* See Note A. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.



in that city in the time of Verus, terminating in that of their bishop, the venerable Polycarp.

Of the constancy of mind exhibited by these witnesses for the truth they relate, that "those who stood around were astonished, when they saw them at one time lacerated with scourges even to their inmost veins and arteries (so that the innermost parts and members of their bodies were exposed to view), then laid upon the shells of the horn-fish, and on some very sharp spikes strewed on the ground, and undergoing every form of punishments and torments, and, lastly, thrown to the wild beasts for food."\*

The prediction, it will be observed, was not, that the Church should be annihilated; nor was any warning given, as in the case of Ephesus, that there might be a period when its candlestick should be removed out of its place; but that it was to be greatly afflicted. And it is remarkable, that though, like all the rest of the Eastern Churches, it has declined greatly from its primitive purity, there is still in the city of Smyrna a remnant of its ancient Church, as well as a large number of Christians from other countries, so that the faith of Christ still flourishes in Smyrna; though, in too many of its adherents, in a form overlaid with much that is corrupt;† but, let us hope, to be hereafter again purified by Him who breaks not the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax.

The next address is to the Church of Pergamos. And praise is given to it for the steady faithfulness

\* See Note B. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

† See Note C. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

with which it had adhered to the faith of Christ, even unto martyrdom, amidst all the wickedness by which it was surrounded; which was such, that the city is here entitled *the seat of Satan*. But it appears, that there were some among them who indulged in the iniquities which Balaam taught Balak to cast as a stumbling-block in the way of the children of Israel, and partook of the idol feasts and sinful habits of their neighbours; and some also who held the impure doctrines of the Nicolaitans, and therefore the admonition is given, “Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”

The threatening is here limited, we may observe, to the evil-doers, and does not involve the whole Church. In the case of Ephesus, the warning involved the total removal of its candlestick. Here it is of a more limited kind.

And it appears that the Church of Pergamos still remains, though in a weak and corrupt state. It had been consecrated by the blood of a martyr, even when our Lord addressed it through His apostle, whom He calls his faithful martyr Antipas. And we learn from Eusebius, that several other martyrs suffered there in after times. “There are still extant,” he says, “the memorials of others, who suffered martyrdom at Pergamos . . . . who, after many and most illustrious confessions of the faith, terminated their course by a glorious death.” \*

And a small remnant of Christian worshippers is

\* See Note D. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.



still permitted to exist there, even after the lapse of 1800 years of persecution and trial.\*

The Church in Thyatira is the next to receive our Lord's admonition. The warning is preceded, as in the former cases, by a strong testimony to the piety and faithfulness of the Church *as a whole*. "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."

But the charge is brought against it, that it permitted one who styled herself a prophetess to teach doctrines tending to alienate those who followed her from the pure worship of God. Against her, therefore, and her followers, it was denounced, that they should be cast into "great tribulation," except they repented; and all the churches should know, by the fate of those unhappy persons, that the Son of God is "He which searcheth the reins and hearts."

But to the angel or supreme minister of that Church are addressed these remarkable words:—"But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

Unfortunately, the records of the primitive Church

\* See Note E. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

are too scanty and insufficient to enable us to state the precise way in which the judgments denounced against certain persons in the Church of Thyatira were fulfilled. The promises to the chief pastor, and those who remained faithful to the truth, seem to be intended to apply to all those portions of the Christian Church that shall be found faithful to the essentials of the truth at the close of the present Dispensation.

Of the particular case of Thyatira, all that can now be said is, that there still remains in it a Christian Church, holding, amidst various departures from the simplicity of the primitive doctrine, the essentials of the Christian faith.\*

The address to the Church of Sardis presents a painful picture of the state of things in that Apostolical Church, even at that early period. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." It is admitted, indeed, that there were some among them of Christ's faithful followers. "Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." And in the Epistle of Polycrates to Victor, Bishop of Rome, in the second century, Melito, one of the early bishops of this Church, is spoken of as one specially guided by the Holy Spirit.†

But, as a Church, it was dead. The great majority of its members had the *name* of Christians, but were *dead* in their sins. The admonition to it therefore is to watchfulness, to the strengthening of the little evi-

\* See Note F. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

† See Note G. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.



dences of life that remained, and to repentance; and the threatening is added,—“If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.”

But the warning was in vain, and the threatened judgment has overtaken it. For many centuries it has been without a Christian inhabitant. The city itself, indeed, great as it was, the ancient capital of Lydia, has fallen almost as completely as the Christian Church which was in it, for it now consists only of a few mud huts, the abode of Turkish herdsmen.\*

To the Church in Philadelphia belonged the inestimable privilege of having a testimony borne to its character by our Blessed Lord to which there was no drawback. It was altogether commendatory. That Church had kept the word of Christ, and not denied His name. And the promise is, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (iii. 10—12.)

Now, it is impossible to contemplate the subsequent fate of this city, and the Christian Church in it, without seeing how remarkably this promise has been ful-

\* See Note H. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

filled. When the surrounding cities, many of them far greater and stronger, were falling an easy prey to the Turks, Philadelphia for a long period maintained its independence and resisted every attack. And when at length it yielded, it was only by an honourable capitulation, which left its inhabitants in quiet possession of their city. Her fate is thus described by the infidel historian Gibbon: "At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in a scene of ruins."

But while thus compelled to bear witness to the fact, he alludes to the remarkable promise in the words before us with the characteristic sneer, "Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or courage."\*

We accept the unwilling testimony that she *has* been saved, and that such preservation is agreeable to the fate which the word of God predicted for her. And we leave the insinuation that it was due to their unaided courage to be dealt with by the light of facts and history. That *their* courage alone should be equal to the task of encountering the arms of the Turks, would have been as great a miracle as that which is the apparent object of the historian's sarcasm. That Divine aid should be given to God's faithful worshippers is surely a less wonderful event

\* See Note I, to Sermon vii. in Appendix.



than that the citizens of one second-rate city in Asia should so overpass all the rest of Asia in courage, as to be able to resist a power under which all the others had fallen prostrate. But the credulity of the sceptic, when the authority of Revelation has to be explained away, is often such as is unsurpassed even by the wildest dreams of a fanatic.

. And it is a remarkable fact, that this city seems to have been recognized by its enemies as a city under the Divine protection, for it is called by the Turks by a name signifying *the city of God*.\*

It is stated by a traveller that visited Philadelphia about thirty years ago, that Christianity was still in a flourishing state there, divine service being performed every Sunday in five churches, and that its Bishop regarded the Holy Scriptures as “the only foundation of all religious belief,” and lamented and desired the removal of the abuses which had crept into the Greek Church.†

From the case of the Church in Philadelphia, we have to pass finally to that of one which is, alas! in every respect a complete contrast to it—the Church in Laodicea.

The charge brought against it was for its *lukewarmness*. “Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will cast thee out of my mouth.” It supposed itself, moreover, to be “rich,” and to “have need of nothing;” though it was, in fact, in a spiritual sense, as a Christian Church, “wretched, and

\* See Note K. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

† See Note L. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked ;” and it was exhorted to obtain from its Saviour “gold tried in the fire, that it might be rich, and white raiment, that it might be clothed.” And the gracious words were added: “As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

But the cold callousness of the lukewarm Christian, who supposes himself, like the Jews of old, to be rich in merit for his external services, while his heart is in the world, is perhaps the hardest obstacle of all to the existence of genuine piety. The Church of Laodicea was in a great and populous city, abounding in wealth and all its usual accompaniments, and was therefore exposed to all the temptations which a refined luxuriousness can bring to bear upon the faith of the Christian. And it appears to have imbibed the spirit of those by whom it was surrounded, and to have endeavoured to combine the service of God and Mammon.

Not, indeed, that it was without some external evidence of zeal for the cause of Christ, for it was the seat of a metropolitan who had several suffragan bishops. But the eye of its Divine Lord looked beneath the surface of its external form, and where man saw nothing but what was comely, and riches and power



that promised permanence, detected the absence of that sincerity and devotedness in His service to which alone He attaches any value.

With a gracious call to repentance, therefore, and a promise that He stands ever at the door of our hearts pleading for admittance, that He may bring us into communion with himself, He joins the merited warning, that in the *absence* of such a disposition of mind, He will cast them out of his favour, as a thing nauseated is cast out of the mouth.

What has been its fate? The whole city was utterly destroyed by *the same enemies* that vainly endeavoured to take Philadelphia. For many centuries it has been a desolate ruin. "The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea," says the same historian from whom I have just quoted, "are now peopled with wolves and foxes."\* An eye-witness of its ruins two centuries ago described it as "utterly desolated and without any inhabitants, except wolves and jackals and foxes." And so it remains to this day.†

Surely it is impossible to view the difference between the fate of these various cities, so exactly corresponding with the promises and warnings of Holy Writ, and not see in it the hand of God, punishing the unfaithful and worldly-minded professor, and protecting His sincere worshippers. We derive, therefore, from these addresses of our Blessed Saviour to the Seven Churches of Asia, through his beloved Apostle (who had probably been more especially connected with them as a supreme pastor, and was on

\* See Note M. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

† See Note N. to Sermon vii. in Appendix.

that account, perhaps, commissioned to send them these messages from above), another proof of that perfect foreknowledge of the future which is visible in the warnings of Holy Scripture.

But the portion of Scripture which is now before us is one which it is impossible to dismiss from our view without noticing some of those solemn practical lessons it brings before *us*, both in the way of warning and encouragement.

And first let us notice the various characters under which our Lord presents himself to these different Churches, according to the different circumstances of their case.

The message to the Church of Ephesus, which was accused of having declined from its first love, and become neglectful of the works of piety which originally distinguished it, is sent by Him as one who holds the seven stars—that is, the chief pastors of the Seven Churches—in his right hand, as ready to give them his constant support, and who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, which are the Seven Churches, observant of their ways, watchful whether they remain true to His cause and zealous in His service, and show by their works whose they are and whom they serve.

The message to the Church in Smyrna—which was poor and afflicted and about to suffer great tribulation, but was encouraged to be faithful unto death, the reward of which should be a crown of life—was sent by Him as “the first and the last,” that is, as ever living, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, to protect them at all times and under all circum-



stances ; and as one, moreover, who “*was* dead and *is* alive,” who had Himself suffered death upon the cross, but had risen to a life of glory and immortality, the consequence of that death.

The message to the Church in Pergamos—where, even in the midst of that dwelling-place of Satan, a portion had remained firm to the true faith amidst the fires of persecution, but others had polluted the faith by an admixture of impure doctrines—is sent by Him as one who holds in his hand a sharp sword with two edges ; one for the protection of his faithful servants, the other for the punishment of those that dishonour his holy name by sinful courses.

The message to the Church in Thyatira—where the faithful were mingled with the deluded followers of those who taught their disciples to corrupt the pure worship of God, and follow idolatrous practices—is sent by Him as one whose eyes are as a flame of fire, vigilant and all-powerful, so as to penetrate even the hearts of men, and to separate between the true and the unfaithful worshippers ; and whose feet are like fine brass—emblematical, I conceive, of the perfection of his ways in his dealings with mankind.

The message to the Church in Sardis—where the great majority were but nominal Christians—is sent by Him as one who possesses all the gifts of the Spirit bodily, who has the seven spirits of God which are sent forth into all the earth, and knows all that is taking place throughout the world, and who has also the seven stars ; that is, who has the guardianship of the Churches committed to him.

The message to the Church in Philadelphia—whose

earnest and steady faith obtained the promise of permanent favour and protection—is sent by Him as one whose *holiness* and *truthfulness* ensure his faithfulness to his promises, and whose irresistible *power* is such as to secure their fulfilment, who “openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.”

The message to the Church in Laodicea—whose lukewarmness and self-conceit elicit the solemn warning, that speedy repentance could alone prevent its being cast out of His favour as loathsome—is sent by Him as “the Amen, the faithful and true witness,” as one who is inflexible in the fulfilment of his word, whether it be the word of promise or threatening; and also as the Head of God’s creation, appointed to rule over it, and place all his enemies under his feet.

Let us join, then, all these characters in one, and we learn the real nature of Him whose sleepless eye watches over *us*, our Church collectively, ourselves individually. He is ever present for our support, walking in the midst of his Churches, observant of their course; He ever lives to be their protector under whatever trials may befall them, and his own example, as the once suffering but now exalted Saviour, is to be their comfort under every affliction; He holds in his hand a sharp sword with two edges, for the purposes both of protection and punishment; His scrutiny none can escape, and He will act with us as a heart-searching God, and as one whose ways are all perfect in holiness; from Him, as he sits upon the throne above, proceed the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth, to inspect, to purify, to enlighten,



to comfort, to strengthen his servants, and all the Churches are left to his guardianship as Mediator; He is holy, true, faithful, and omnipotent to fulfil all his promises; He is also inflexible in the performance of his threatenings, and is the Head over all things for his Church.

Such is the character of Him who offers himself to us in this world as a Saviour, but hereafter will come as our Judge, and who, even here, will inflict upon the obdurate sinner the threatened punishment.

Moreover we cannot fail to notice, how remarkable a proof these Churches afford us of the tendency to corruption in all Christian Churches. Here are seven Churches, founded by Apostles, which, at a period when many who had been conversant with the Apostles themselves must still have existed among them, are in such a state that two only are addressed in the language of unmixed commendation. One had lost its first love; another had only a name to live, and was dead; another was lukewarm, so as to be an object of aversion to its Saviour; and two others cherished among them those who were teaching doctrines that corrupted the true faith, and those who defended errors that led to impurity of life.

These warnings also show us, with what vigilance, with what a scrutinizing eye, our Blessed Lord watches what takes place in the churches of His professed worshippers. It is not to the overt acts of sin alone that He looks, but to the dispositions of the heart. Have we lost our first earnestness in His service? Are we lukewarm in our devotions and efforts in His cause, and giving our hearts to the world? Then He

no longer regards us with favour ; He no longer looks upon us as objects for his protecting care.

Still, indeed, for a long period is He patient and forbearing ; calling to repentance, and leaving open the door of mercy. But if amendment is looked for in vain, His threatened judgments take their course. Man executes them, often the unconscious instrument for working the purposes of His will. But they are from Him, and but the fulfilment of His word.

Again, have we stood firm in the maintenance of His cause ; have we “ kept His word,” its doctrines, and its precepts ? Then the promise is, “ I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” “ Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.”

Time would fail me were I to attempt to notice all the various lessons which these addresses to the seven Churches bring before us ; but there is one more which demands our attention, and that is, that in the case of Philadelphia we see how the presence of a Christian Church, where the faith of Christ is upheld in its purity, and the worship and service of its members are the worship and service of the heart, tends to the preservation of the city or country in which it exists. All may fall around it, but the city where God is truly worshipped and honoured will stand erect, a column in the midst of ruins. Not, indeed, that this is done without human efforts, but by the blessing of God upon them. When the valiant warriors of Philadelphia were defending their city, the eye of the world saw nothing



but “courage ;” but the eye of the Christian recognized the fulfilment of God’s promises. History tells us how the victorious Ottomans, triumphant over all Asia, chafed at the indignity, that one little city should for fourscore years resist all their efforts ; and at last submitted to grant terms that left its inhabitants in quiet possession of it.

But of such a city it may be said, in the language of the Psalmist, “God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved,” but “the Lord of hosts is with them, the God of Jacob is their refuge.” (Ps. xlv. 5—7.)

“He giveth power to the faint ; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail : but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Is. xl. 29—31.)

## SERMON VIII.

*(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, November 30th, 1856.)*

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2 THESS. ii. 3—10.

*“Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things ? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work : only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming : even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”*

THE direction given by the founder of these Lectures was, that the Lecturer should endeavour “to prove the truth of revealed Religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, from the completion of the Prophecies in the Old and New Testament which re-



late to the Christian Church, *especially to the apostasy of Papal Rome.*"

In conformity with this requirement, I endeavoured, in the earlier Lectures, to show the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the various ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth, and in the last the fulfilment of the remarkable predictions of St. John in the Apocalypse respecting the seven Churches of Asia; and in the Lectures subsequent to this I purpose to notice the plain and clear predictions occurring in the Old Testament of the advent, person, and work of Christ. In the present I shall endeavour to point out, so far as the confined limits of one discourse enable me to do so, the fulfilment of the prophecies which relate to "the apostasy of Papal Rome."

As it is a matter which I am specially directed to discuss in these Lectures, I offer no further reason for its selection. But there is one preliminary remark which I am anxious to make. When public attention is directed to the differences of Christians among themselves, and strong expressions are used respecting the errors in which any portion of the Christian Church is involved, some are apt to consider that such denunciations are uncharitable, when used respecting those who profess to be followers of the same Lord. In reply to such a notion, however, it is only necessary to observe, that we are distinctly forewarned in our text that *the great apostate* from the *true* Christian faith, who will proudly exalt himself as a God upon earth, will nevertheless sit in the temple of God, and work signs and lying wonders so as to deceive those who, while they know the truth, do not love it.

Our text is one of those passages that occur in the New Testament which distinctly forewarn the Christian Church of the future rise of an Apostate Power, in her own bosom, which, though having its seat in the nominal Christian Church, would yet be the enemy of Christ. Connecting with it *the other* passages which, by general consent, relate to the same subject, we obtain a tolerably clear view of the *marks* by which this Apostate Power is to be distinguished.

I speak of it as an Apostate *Power*, and not as an *individual*, because the various passages that relate to this subject clearly show, that it is *a succession of individuals*, and not *one person*, that is referred to. And this is in accordance with the ordinary phraseology of Scripture. Thus in Daniel (vii. 3, 17) the four beasts and four kings refer to a succession of individuals. And, in our text, the phrase "he that letteth" indicates a reigning Power *having succession*, and not an *individual*.

I shall now, then, call your attention to *the principal marks* which were to characterize the Apostate Power, and endeavour to show, as we proceed, that they are the characteristics of Papal Rome.

In the Book of the Revelation we have a tolerably plain declaration where the *seat* of this Apostate Power is to be. It is there described (for the prophecy, by general consent, refers to the same Power as that mentioned in our text) under the character of a woman, arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns, and the seven heads are said to be seven mountains, on which



she was to sit, and the woman is plainly declared to be "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (Rev. xvii. 3, 4, 9, 18.)

No impartial person, I suppose, can fail to see, that Rome is here distinctly pointed out as the *seat* of the Apostate Power. For what *other* city was there which reigned over the kings of the earth?

And this Power is represented as riding upon a beast (the prophetic emblem of a temporal empire) full of names of blasphemy; which strictly accords with the history of the Church of Rome. For that Church availed itself of its possession of the seat of the Roman Empire to build up its claims of universal dominion; and made the shadow that remained of the old temporal Empire subserve its ambitious purposes. And still do we see this to be the case. And that Empire was for ages devoted to the worship of false gods, and accustomed to add to its idols the gods of the nations it conquered.

And this Apostate Power is spoken of under the name of Babylon, which the early Fathers recognize as Rome.\* In *their* day, it was the representative of Babylon, as the great seat of *temporal* empire, and vied with its predecessor in its Pagan idolatries and crimes. The ecclesiastical empire that was to succeed that temporal one, and which was the especial subject of prophecy, was not then established, but the seat of empire is the same, and the one is the successor of the other.

The Apostle, in our text, gives us also an important note of *time*, as to the *rise* of this Power. He inti-

\* See Note A. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

mates that he had told the Thessalonians, that there was *then* a Power in existence that withheld and prevented its rise; for that, though the mystery of iniquity did already work, he who then letted, or hindered, would let, until he was taken out of the way. The *spirit* of Antichrist, as we know from St. John (1 John ii. 18; iv. 3), was already at work, so that, even *then*, there might be said to be "many Antichrists," many opposers of the true faith of Christ in the world; but there was a Power in existence that prevented any one of these establishing himself as a Power that should bear rule in the Church, and influence the kingdoms of the world, as the predicted Apostate Power was to do. But when that Power was taken out of the way, "*then* should that wicked be revealed, whom, &c."

Now, we have already seen that the seat of this Apostate Power is to be Rome. This consideration alone, therefore, leads us to the conclusion that its rise was to be when the temporal Power which then existed at Rome, and which, while it lasted, would not have suffered the existence of such a Power as that predicted, should be removed sufficiently to make way for it. The Apostle would of course abstain from *naming* the Power to which he alluded, because it would have been *then* an unpardonable offence to have anticipated the waning of the Roman Empire. And as it was a Power in existence at the time when the Apostle wrote, it is difficult to understand what *other* Power could be alluded to than that which then reigned supreme over the earth.

And this interpretation has the general consent of



all the early Christian writers from the beginning. "Who," says Tertullian, "can he be that letteth, but the Roman state?" "After the waning of the Roman Empire," says an early commentator on our text, "Antichrist will appear." The same interpretation is given by Jerome, Chrysostom, and in fact by the whole stream of early Fathers.\*

Now, I need hardly say, that this accords exactly with the rise of the Papal Power. Precisely as the authority and influence of the Roman Empire waned at Rome, did the authority and influence of the Popes increase. And the Papal Power obtained temporal dominion precisely in the way in which Daniel (Dan. vii.) had predicted the rise of such a kingdom out of the divided Roman Empire; namely, by gaining possession of three of those kingdoms, and uniting them into one sovereignty under the Pope.

Another special and characteristic mark of the Apostate Power is, that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

This surely is so remarkable a characteristic, that, wherever we find it, there we may be satisfied that the Apostate Power is to be found. He is to oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, that is, all emperors, kings, and magistrates, who in the 82nd Psalm are called *gods*, and to whom, in a certain sense, our Blessed Saviour recognizes the word *gods* as applying (John x. 34, 35); and above all that is

\* See Note B. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

worshipped; that is, as the word here employed generally signifies, revered and held in honour. And, as has been truly observed, if this be not applicable to the Papal Power, it is difficult to say who there ever has been, or can be, to whom it should belong.\*

And as God, he is to sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

The exposition of these words by one of the most learned of the early Fathers, before the rise of the Romish Apostasy, (Theodoret,) was this:—"The Apostle has called the Churches the temple of God, in which the man of sin will violently seize the supremacy; endeavouring to show that he himself is a God." †

The proofs that this characteristic is fulfilled in the Popes of Rome are abundant.

The Pope, says Innocent III., (in a passage which forms part of the Romish canon law,) "represents not a mere man, but a true God upon earth." ‡

And in the authorized Gloss on this passage in the same canon law, it is said, that, on this account, the Pope "is said to have a heavenly power of determination, . . . and therefore changes the nature of things . . . and that his will stands for law. . . . And that he can set free from the obligation of the law, and can make that just which is unjust, by correcting and changing laws." And the same Gloss, as printed in some editions, elsewhere gives the

\* See Note C. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

† See Note D. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

‡ See Note E. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.



Pope expressly the name of “our Lord God the Pope.” \*

The name has also been constantly given to the Pope by his adherents, without any repudiation of it on his part; as in the fifth Lateran Council, where the Pope was publicly addressed as “another God upon earth;” and as one to whom all power was given in heaven and in earth.†

Cardinal Bellarmine formally teaches, that “all the names which are attributed to Christ in Scripture, implying his supremacy over the Church, are also attributed to the Pope.” ‡

It would be easy to multiply such proofs, if necessary, to any amount.

Thus he sits in the temple of God, the Church of Christ, as God; claiming Divine power and Divine honours; changing (as it was prophesied that he should do, Dan. vii. 25.) times and laws; and for a certain period they have been given into his hands. He challenges authority over the universal Church of Christ, and holds as rebels all who do not submit to his sway.

And even in a still more literal sense he sits in the temple of God as God. None who are at all acquainted with the ritual of the Church of Rome will hesitate to admit this. The ceremony called “the adoration of the Pope,”—without our insisting upon the meaning of the mere word “adoration,” which may doubtless be used in different senses,—is alone a sufficient proof. To mention only one part of the cere-

\* See Note F. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

† See Note G. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

‡ See Note H. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

monial, what, we may ask, are we to understand from the circumstance, that that altar which is supposed to be the seat of the peculiar and bodily presence of Christ, is made in this ceremonial the footstool of the Pope?\*

Another remarkable characteristic of this Apostate Power is, that he “had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” (Rev. xiii. 11.) There was to be an appearance of the lamb, while the words spoken by him were to be like those of a dragon. A more accurate description of Papal Rome could not be given. While its ecclesiastical character is attempted to be maintained by an outward show of humility, so that he who exalts himself above all mortals, and sits in the Church of Christ as a God, styles himself “the servant of the servants of God,” and veils his real character and designs under specious names and a feigned humility, its threatenings, denunciations and commands are of the most arbitrary and imperious kind. It claims to be set up over all nations and kingdoms, to pull down, to destroy, to scatter, to plant, and to build up. It asserts the possession of a power over all the kings and princes of the earth, and has frequently exercised that power against various emperors and kings, from whom it has exacted, and still continues to require in its public laws, various servile offices.†

This Apostate Power was also to exercise all the power of the first beast before it (Rev. xiii. 12), which also fully agrees with the character of Papal Rome. For though the power is of a different kind, yet it

\* See Note I. to Sermon viii. in Appendix. † See Note B.



claims the same universal dominion. And it is a power even greater than that of any temporal empire, for it extends to the hearts and consciences of men, and has often manifested its effects in a way to which the temporal power of the ancient Roman Empire can afford no parallel.

Moreover, notwithstanding that this Power sits in the temple of God, it is represented as being devoted to idolatry, under the usual Scriptural metaphor of fornication. “The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.” (Rev. xvii. 4.)

The idolatry of the Church of Rome has been so often insisted upon, and fully set forth, by the greatest divines of our Church, such as Bishop Stillingfleet and others, that I need scarcely stop to give any elaborate proof of it.\* To say nothing now of the worship given in that Church to saints and angels, and especially to the Virgin Mary, which, under whatever *name* it may be veiled, is of a *kind* which is due to God alone, the worship given to that which is upon the Communion Table, after the consecration of the elements,—a worship which is admitted to be of the highest kind,—cannot be vindicated from the charge of idolatry. If that which lies upon the Communion Table is, after consecration, either in its entirety, or as it respects any part of it, Christ himself, then, whether we suppose the substance of the bread to remain or not, that which lies upon the Table

\* Note K. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

demands our adoration. But if this is not the case, any adoration paid to that which lies upon the Table is idolatrous. And the mere belief of the worshipper, that there is a bodily presence of Christ there, is no more a justification of it than the false notions of the heathen of the indwelling of the Deity in their images is a justification of their misdirected worship. If it were so, there would hardly be such a thing as idolatry in the world.

We have also a remarkable description of the conduct and practices of this Apostate Power. Thus in our text it is said, that his coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth,—that is, with all the false miracles that characterize a corrupt system of religion, effected through the aid or instigation of the great enemy of mankind, and all the deceits that unrighteousness can devise among those that are given up to perdition because they did not love the truth.

And of the same Power the Apostle is clearly speaking in his first Epistle to Timothy, where he says, that “the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” (1 Tim. iv. 1—3.)

Can there be a question whether this description



applies to the Church of Rome? Is it not a part of her system, wherever public feeling will permit of its being carried out, to obtain the confidence of the people by means of lying miracles? I am not speaking now of the impositions for which *individuals only* may be responsible, nor of those of mediæval times, but of those of the present day, and for which the Church, as a body, is responsible. Let us take, as an instance, (and I will mention but one among the multitude that all know might be produced), the pretended liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius. Can there be a more apt specimen of what the apostle refers to when he speaks of lying wonders? And yet this is one still put forth in the face of Europe and the world as a claim to confidence.\*

What, we involuntarily ask, must be the judgment of a perfectly holy God on a Church which tolerates such things? I am speaking not of individuals, but of the system; for I doubt not that it may be said of that Church, as it was of Sardis of old,—“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.”

And (not now to follow out all the various marks here ascribed to the Apostate Power, which would occupy too much time) can it be denied, that the characteristic of “forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats” eminently belongs to the Church of Rome? Even with those who may question the reference of some *parts* of the description to

\* See Note L. to Sermon viii. in Appendix.

the Church of Rome, of this there can be no doubt of the applicability. The forced celibacy of the clergy, and the extent to which monastic institutions are carried in the countries that own the supremacy of the Pope, are evidences of its applicability which no impartial person can dispute.

I will notice but one more characteristic of this Apostate Power. It is represented as “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” It is to have its seat in the Church of Christ, and yet to be drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And it was to arise as the Roman Empire fell. Is there *any other* Power, then, than Papal Rome to which this description can be applied? And surely, as members of a Church owning the faith of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, and tracing its formularies almost wholly to them, we cannot hesitate as to its applicability. The Christians martyred for the true faith in this, and other countries, by Papal Rome far exceed in number the victims of Rome Pagan.

Here the necessary limits of one discourse compel me to stop. I have been able to do little more than touch transiently on a few of the leading features of the case. And this I have endeavoured to do in the most dispassionate form of argument, simply calling your attention to the facts of the case, and the conclusions which seem necessarily to arise out of them.

The first inference to which the subject of these Lectures requires me to draw your attention, is, the evidence afforded by the fulfilment of these prophecies, which we ourselves behold in the Papal Apostasy, to



the Divine origin of the Holy Scriptures in which they occur.

But I cannot conclude without a few brief remarks on the important practical bearing of the subject before us.

All must admit, that the prophecies to which I have called your attention this morning are of a very remarkable and important character, and such as demand our attentive consideration. They are not such as can be passed over as of no practical moment to us, because they contain a warning to which we must be careful to give heed. There are practical lessons to be derived from them which are of the highest importance to our welfare. If these prophecies are from God, it is our duty carefully to examine and endeavour to understand them. We cannot put aside such statements and treat them as things having no existence. Our Christian profession requires us to take them as they stand, give them the interpretation which reason requires, and then *act* upon the instruction they afford us, without any regard to other considerations than what the fear of God brings before us. And if we come to the conclusion, that there is any truth in the mode of interpretation I have set before you, then it follows, that there are duties incumbent upon us with relation to the Church of Rome to which our duty to God binds us.

Thus much surely is clear from the language of prophecy, that there is to arise in the Christian Church an Anti-christian Power, apostate from the true faith, and one marked by many of the characteristics which we see to belong to Papal Rome. And

when we further consider what is the evidence as to the *seat* of that Power and the *time* of its rise, can we hesitate to say, that we see that Power in existence in Papal Rome?

That there are characteristics of that Power which may be more forcibly and vividly manifested in times yet future, I am far from being disposed to deny. Of some of the prophetic declarations respecting it there may be a more full and striking fulfilment. And we have every reason to suppose, from the past history of the Church of Rome, that if the period of her existence is much prolonged, her dogmas and practices may become still more corrupt than they now are. What is called the march of intellect has made so little impression upon her, that we have recently seen another unscriptural and monstrous dogma added to her creed, and, in the face of clear evidence to the contrary, promulgated as a truth received from the beginning. And thus probably will she advance, fulfilling more and more the description given of her in the word of God, and with increasing boldness as her time is prolonged; and with so little consciousness of her real state and destined end, that even when the time of her destruction is come, she will be saying in her heart, as the prophetic voice warns us, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." (Rev. xviii. 7.)

That her true character is not generally acknowledged, is only in accordance with the language of prophecy. The character of "mystery" is inscribed upon her. Her iniquity is not open and professed; it is hidden under the veil of a mystery. Her disso-



luteness reigns under the seeming sanctity of the Confessional; her assumption of power is founded upon a pretended literal interpretation of our Lord's own words; her idolatry in the Eucharist upon the honour due to the person of Christ.

And they who rest in words and names, and are not firmly established in the truth, in the love of it, may thus be deceived. And "because iniquity shall abound," we are told, "the love of many shall wax cold."

But the true follower of Christ will test her claims by the word of God. Weighed in this balance, they will be estimated at their true value.

Every page of the New Testament shows us, that the religion of Christ is one that appeals to the reason and common sense of mankind. Nothing is more strongly marked in the teaching of our Blessed Lord and his Apostles, than the absence of all attempts to captivate mankind by pleasing their senses or fascinating their imaginations, or giving them ordinances which, while they have a "show of wisdom in will worship and humility and neglecting of the body," are but vain and superstitious ceremonies. (Col. ii. 23.)

It behoves us, then, to recollect, that this Papal Apostasy is not a thing of other times, or one with which we have no concern; but a present, subtle, active enemy to the truth, pervading more or less the universal Church, and seeking to exercise an active sovereignty over the whole.

What our duty, then, is as individuals,—and upon this point only I shall now speak,—cannot be a matter of question. The warning is distinctly given,—“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her

sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. xviii. 4.) And none that fully realize the character of God as revealed in His own word, and compare it with the principles and practices of Papal Rome, can fail to see, that love of the one is incompatible with love of the other.



## SERMON IX.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, Jan. 4, 1857.)

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ACTS X. 43.

*“To Him give all the Prophets witness.”*

AT the commencement of these Lectures I stated, that there were *three* classes of prophecy from the fulfilment of which the truth of revealed Religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, might be deduced; namely, those of the Old Testament that relate to the ancient kingdoms and nations of the earth; those, likewise of the Old Testament, referring to the person and work of Christ; and those of the New Testament that concern events that were to occur in the postapostolic period of the Church.

To the *first* and *last* of these I have devoted the Lectures already delivered. In this and the succeeding Lectures, I propose to call your attention to a few of the leading prophecies relating to the Messiah.

As these prophecies are by far the most important of all that are contained in Holy Scripture, so, by the mercy of God, are they scattered in abundance throughout that sacred Record from the very beginning of Genesis to the last words of the last of the Old Testament prophets. Even before the expulsion of our

first parents from Paradise, was the promise given of that seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head. And for more than three thousand years was this prophecy repeated, amplified, and carried out into all the particular circumstances with which its fulfilment was to be accompanied, at various times and places, through the mouth of patriarchs and kings, of priests and saints of God. The last of these inspired prophets was Malachi, who closed the testimony with the warning, (addressed more especially to the Jewish nation) that the Lord whom they sought should suddenly come to His temple, and sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and to them that feared the name of the Lord of hosts should be the Sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings. (Mal. iii. 1—3 ; iv. 2.)

That I may be able, in that brief survey of these various prophecies to which I am necessarily limited in these Lectures, to give even a compendious view of their vast extent and comprehensiveness and at the same time wonderful precision and minuteness, I shall consider them in the following order. First I shall point out *the general nature and character* of the prophetic testimony to the Messiah. Secondly, the prophecies relating to the time, place, and circumstances of His appearance. Thirdly, those relating to the character of His person and mission. Fourthly, those that concern the events that happened to Him.

And may that Spirit of truth, whose office it is to testify of Him, be present with us to lead us into all truth.

On the present occasion I purpose calling your



attention to the *general nature and character* of the prophetic testimony to the Messiah.

We are so accustomed from early childhood to hear and read the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the person and work of Christ, that but few realize the true character and force of their testimony. Our very familiarity with them tends to make us overlook the distinguishing characteristics that give them their greatest weight.

And I must add, that they are so generally regarded in their *individual* aspect, instead of being viewed *as a whole*, that more than half their force is *lost* by this *dissociation* of them from one another. They pervade the course of time with a full and flowing *stream* of testimony, taking its rise in the age of our first parents, and running onwards in one continued stream for more than three thousand years. This testimony we must contemplate *as a whole*. One prophecy selected from that testimony is but as a small portion taken from a mighty river to show its resistless force.

Many minds might hesitate to admit the force of one or another prophecy. Ingenious explanations may be resorted to by which the words of one or another prophecy may be made to appear applicable to *other* persons than Jesus of Nazareth, or *other* events than those that happened to Him. But take the *whole* of the prophetic testimony relating to the future appearance of a mighty Deliverer and Saviour of mankind, and we see, not merely that there is no one else in whom the various prophecies find their fulfilment, but that in Jesus of Nazareth *all* of them, even those that seemed most discordant and

contradictory, had their complete and perfect accomplishment.

In illustration of the general nature and character of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, let us mark,—

(1.) Their number and variety.

They commence with the promise made to our first parents that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. iii. 15.) The evident reference to this prophecy in some of the traditions of the heathen nations,\* clearly shows, that it was considered from the first as foreshadowing the appearance of a great future Deliverer of mankind from the bondage of Satan.

As time advanced, a far more clear and definite declaration was made to Abraham, who was set apart as the progenitor of a race separated from the rest of mankind as God's peculiar people, from whom that mighty Deliverer was to spring in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. (Gen. xxii. 18.)

His grandson Jacob proceeded to specify *the tribe* from which the promised Deliverer should come, and when a stranger in Egypt, dependent with all his family upon the precarious favour of an idolatrous monarch, calmly and without doubt spoke of Judah's sceptre, and its continuance until Shiloh came; unto whom the gathering of the people should be. (Gen. xlix. 10.)

A few generations later, the great Lawgiver of the Jewish people was commissioned to predict the Messiah's advent as a prophet, raised up from among them, like himself, but with more extensive power

\* See note A. to Sermon ix. in Appendix.



and authority, whose hearers should incur the direct judgments of God for disobedience to His words. (Deut. xviii. 15—19. Compare Acts iii. 22, and vii. 27.)

Proceeding onwards to the time of David, we find the character and offices of the promised Deliverer foreshadowed in the Book of Psalms with a clearness which has made that book the especial study of the Christian Church for its revelations respecting the Messiah. In this Book we see how, in the process of time, the vague and indistinct foreshadowings of a future Deliverer had gradually ripened into those distinct delineations of the person and office of the Messiah which afforded grounds of peace and joy to the Old Testament Church.

His state of humiliation on earth, His sufferings and death, His being laid in the grave but without seeing corruption, His resurrection and ascension, His victories over His enemies, the establishment of His kingdom in the earth,—are all foreshadowed in terms which, however mysterious to the ancient Jewish Church, have all been made abundantly plain by the fulfilment of the events they predicted. (See Psalms xvi., xxii., xl., lxxxix., cxviii., &c. &c.)

Obscure, for instance, as the prophecy might be, that the stone which the builders should refuse should become the headstone of the corner (Ps. cxviii. 22), subsequent events proved it to be one of the most remarkable predictions of the promised Saviour, and one of the clearest proofs of the Divine origin of the Old Testament prophecies.

The revelations of the Book of Psalms were suc-

ceeded by the testimonies of a long line of prophets following one another at certain intervals, according to the good pleasure of God, bearing witness to the time and place of the appearance of the promised Deliverer, the character of His person and mission, and the events that were to befall Him, with a clearness, precision, and minuteness that, in the case of some of them, have left the unbeliever no other alternative than the conjecture that they were written *after* the events of which they speak.\*

It is impossible to contemplate the large number and variety of these prophecies without being struck with the stringency of the *test* thus afforded by the mercy of God to their Divine origin, and consequently to the Divine origin of our Lord's mission and the religion He came to establish.

Let us glance at some of the more important among them.

A *virgin* was to conceive and bear a son. (Is. vii. 14.) Out of Bethlehem Ephratah was He to come forth who was to be ruler in Israel. (Mic. v. 2.) Then the eyes of the blind were to be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame were to leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. (Is. xxxv. 5, 6.) Jerusalem's king was to come, not in external pomp and splendour, such as human imagination would have clothed him with, but "lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. ix. 9.) There was to be no beauty that men should desire Him; He was to be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted

\* See Note B. to Sermon ix. in Appendix.



with grief; to be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and cut off out of the land of the living, to have his grave with the wicked and to be with the rich in his death. (Is. liii. 2—9.) Nevertheless he was to have dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him, and his dominion was to be an everlasting dominion. (Dan. vii. 13, 14.)

On all these and various other characteristics of the person and offices of Christ, and the events that were to distinguish His mediatorial work, the testimonies of the prophets are clear and abundant.

A failure, then, in any one of these prophecies would throw discredit upon the whole testimony. And all these were to be fulfilled in one person. What a *test* is thus afforded us of their Divine origin! Is it possible to conceive any human power or agency by which such a series of predictions, so clear and definite, so particular and minute, so extensive and various, and so apparently inconsistent with each other, could be contrived? The powers of any created being may fairly be judged by the heathen oracles. And of *these* it may be safely said, that their brevity and ambiguity clearly showed the source from which they emanated. But the prophecies we are now considering are of a totally different character.

There is also another consideration to which I would call your attention. For what purpose should all these various prophecies have been delivered by man, if they had not emanated from a Divine source? How should it enter into the mind of man that such a person as the Messiah should come into the world?

The predictions of the heathen oracles related to persons or states or circumstances to which the attention of mankind had already been directed. But the prediction of a great future Deliverer, *such as the Messiah was to be*, was one to which no earthly events or circumstances could lead the mind. The necessity for his appearance was grounded upon considerations alien from the thoughts and feelings of mankind. The work of suffering he was to accomplish was so little in accordance with human notions, that even the people who had the oracles of God in their hands, distinctly foretelling the nature of that work, so little recognized it as belonging to the Saviour of mankind, that they were the unconscious instruments for fulfilling it. His mission and work, so far as they were of a spiritual nature, were altogether beyond the unassisted reason of man to imagine.

Let us observe—

(2.) The long period of time during which these prophecies were delivered.

They were not confined to one generation, or even to one race. For more than three thousand years from the period of the fall were prophecies of this nature delivered at various intervals to the world.

Amidst all the changes and revolutions through which the earth and its inhabitants passed during that long period, including the rise and fall of various empires, one unvaried prophecy, renewed and amplified as time advanced, held out to our fallen race the hope of future blessings, in the advent of a mighty Deliverer from the curse entailed on us by the disobedience of our first parents.



Had it been of *man*, it is impossible to conceive that it should have held its ground during so long a period of time. But not only did it hold its ground, but, as age after age rolled away without any apparent prospect of its fulfilment, it only increased in the boldness and precision and fulness of its announcements.

We must notice—

(3.) The number and diversity of those who delivered these prophecies.

The earliest are those recorded by Moses as having been delivered by God himself to Adam and Abraham. The rest were delivered by the mouths of persons of various grades and positions in society,—patriarchs, prophets, priests, and kings,—between whom, for the most part, no intercommunion of any kind could have existed. We have even the testimony of Israel's enemy, Balaam, to add to that of the Jewish prophets, as to the rise of a mighty Deliverer from the offspring of Jacob. (Numb. xxiv. 17.)

And these various prophets, we must observe, did not merely repeat the same prophecy. But, in almost all cases, there is *some part* of the prophecy uttered by each, peculiar to the particular prophet by whom it was delivered. Their prophecies are not copied from one another. There is something in each to show that it came fresh from that Original Source from which the first intimation arose, and from which further light was communicated at the pleasure of Him from whom *all* emanated.

But more especially should we note—

(4.) The minuteness of detail into which many of these prophecies enter.

My purpose here is merely to point out some of the chief prophecies that are marked by this characteristic. A more fitting opportunity will occur to trace the accuracy of their fulfilment.

Thus the price at which the Messiah's life should be estimated, and the very purpose to which that price should be subsequently applied, are distinctly foretold by the prophet Zechariah: "They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them." (Zech. xi. 12, 13.)

Again, the indignities to be offered to Him are thus minutely specified. The prophet Isaiah, speaking in the person of the Messiah, says,—"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting." (Isaiah l. 6.)

"They part my garments among them," says the word of prophecy, "and cast lots upon my vesture." (Ps. xxii. 18.)

A bone of him was not to be broken (Ps. xxxiv. 20), but nevertheless he was to be pierced. (Zech. xii. 10.)

He was to make his grave with the wicked, and yet to be with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah liii. 9.)

Thus, the prophetic statements respecting the Messiah shrunk not from the minutest details as to what was to happen to Him.

The exactness of their fulfilment we shall hereafter point out.

Lastly, we must not fail to observe—

(5.) The seemingly *contradictory* character of some



of these prophecies, while nevertheless they all found their fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth.

Thus, the Messiah was to be David's *son* (Ps. cxxxii. 11, 17, &c.), and yet David's *Lord* (Ps. cx. 1), an enigma which our Lord himself in vain proposed to the Jews for their solution. (Matt. xxii. 41—46.)

He was to be laid in the grave, and yet not to see corruption. (Ps. xvi. 10.)

Even when his soul was to be made an offering for sin, he was at that very time to see his seed and to prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord to prosper in his hand. (Isaiah liii. 10.)

He was to be the Desire of all nations (Hag. ii. 7),\* and yet to be despised and rejected of men (Isaiah liii. 3), the messenger of the covenant whom the Jews "delighted in" (Mal. iii. 1), and yet one "whom man despiseth;" "whom the nation [*i.e.* of the Jews] abhorreth." (Isaiah xlix. 7.)†

He was to be a king, the glories of whose kingdom should exceed those of all the empires on earth, and last for ever (Ps. lxxii., lxxxix. 27, 29, 36, &c. &c.); and yet to be the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; wounded, bruised, and ignominiously put to death. (Isaiah liii. 3, 7.)

Well might the faith of the Old Testament Church find it difficult to realize the *possibility* of the fulfilment of all these apparently conflicting predictions in one individual. But in Him whom we worship as our Saviour, we see, as I shall hereafter show, all these various prophecies exactly fulfilled. The appa-

\* See Note C. to Sermon ix. in Appendix.

† See Note D. to Sermon ix. in Appendix.

rent contradiction only gives weight to their evidence, in the testimony it affords us of the superhuman character of their Source.

True, His kingdom is not yet established in all its promised glory; but when we look around us and see what have even already been the triumphs of the cross of Christ, we cannot doubt that all that *remains* to be fulfilled will be accomplished in its season.

We thus see, then, the general nature and character of that prophetic testimony to the Messiah, which has been so clearly and precisely fulfilled in Him whom we adore as our Lord. And to that fulfilment of prophecies so many and various, so definite and precise, so circumstantial and minute, so abounding with stringent tests of its faithfulness, we point the unbeliever with confidence, as evidence of the truth of Christianity, leaving him utterly without excuse for its rejection.

And now, in conclusion, let me add a few words on the duties flowing from its reception.

How important the consequences that follow from a proof of the truth of Christianity, and the Divine origin of our Blessed Lord's mission and work! If the unbelieving *rejection* of them is a grievous sin, what is the *neglect* of them in the consciousness of their truth? What a responsibility rests upon His professed followers for a reception of Him for all the ends and purposes for which He came?

What, then, does Holy Scripture teach us as to the great object of His work? The words that follow our text briefly but forcibly express it:—"To Him give



all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Or, as our Lord himself teaches us,—“God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 17.)

Remission of sins and everlasting life to our fallen race, were the great objects for the attainment of which He came into the world. And for the reception of these blessings, what is requisite on our part is, faith in Him,—a reliance upon His atonement for our salvation, and a recognition of Him in all his characters and offices as Prophet, Priest, and King: as our Prophet, that we may guide ourselves by His instructions; as our Priest, that we may obtain forgiveness through His mediation; and as our King, that we may submit to His laws. Our faith must be no mere speculative conviction of the true nature of His person and work, but an earnest and operative faith, one that works by love and purifies the heart. For He who came to redeem us by His blood from the penalty of sin, came also to “redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Tit. ii. 14.)

In the contemplation of the prophecies already fulfilled, we see the stability of the foundation upon which our hopes are fixed for the fulfilment of those prophecies and promises that yet *remain* to be accomplished. At present the Church of Christ is in a state of trial and warfare. *That* kingdom of righteousness and peace which Christ came to found, is far from being as yet established on the earth.

Hitherto the struggle between light and darkness, the followers of Christ and the followers of Satan, has issued in very different results from what man might have anticipated. But it must be recollected, that as the predictions relating to our Blessed Lord prophesied of circumstances of a very various and apparently contradictory kind, as characteristic of his person and work, so do the premonitions as to the history of the Christian Church. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth," said our Blessed Lord, "I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." (Matt. x. 34—37.) The religion of Christ coming into a corrupt world, and at first received only by comparatively few individuals belonging to different families and communities, produced strife and discord and hatred even among the nearest relatives. And for Christ and his truth all the ties even of consanguinity were to be sacrificed. And yet the characteristics of his kingdom were to be righteousness and peace. In the figurative language of the prophet—"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Is. xi. 6.)

But if we examine the prophecies more narrowly, we shall find that the struggle between the followers of Christ and Satan was to come *first*, and to be long



and sanguinary, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom to succeed it.

The kingdom of Christ is not the establishment of a human sovereignty over mankind in things spiritual, in the name of Christ and as his substitute, as the Church of Rome fondly dreams. It is the uprooting of vice, the sovereignty over man of those principles of truth, love, righteousness, faithfulness, and peace, which are the characteristics of Christ's religion. As our Blessed Lord forcibly expressed it, "when demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or lo, there! for behold the kingdom of God *is within you*." (Luke xvii. 20, 21.)

When the principles of Christ's religion bear rule over the *hearts* of men, then is the kingdom of Christ come; then will He reign over the earth.

What events may accompany the future complete establishment of this kingdom, we leave wrapped up in the enigmatical foreshadowing in which it has pleased God to clothe them. The language of prophecy would seem to indicate, that at a future time, when the voice of mercy has long been disregarded by the great mass of mankind, the Divine patience and forbearance will be succeeded by temporal judgments upon those who have neglected or corrupted the Christian faith, and that after these judgments the kingdom of Christ will be established. But this we leave with God.

That which belongs to us is, to observe how firm

and solid a ground of joy and rejoicing these predictions afford us, that the present state of things shall *issue* in the universal establishment of the religion of Christ on the earth. The stone cut out without hands, smiting and scattering the kingdoms of this world, and all the corrupt worldly policies by which the earth is now made a scene of strife and blood and confusion, shall become a great mountain filling the whole earth. (Dan. ii. 34, 35, &c.) To the Son of man shall be given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. (Dan. vii. 14.) And to the people of the saints of the Most High shall be given the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven. (Dan. vii. 27.)

The true principles of the Christian faith shall be recognized and carried out as the principles of action throughout the earth. Men, conscious of their natural state of sin and guilt, and of their being indebted to the Blood of Christ for their redemption, and influenced by that spirit which He came to inculcate, will live as brethren actuated by one common faith and one pervading spirit of holy Christian benevolence. This, I say, is the happy consummation in which the word of prophecy assures us the present state of things will terminate, even as it concerns this world. And, as it respects ourselves, we have the comfort of knowing, that the same sure word of prophecy assures to us a still more glorious consummation, when, after the final judgment, all the people of Christ shall be put in possession of the promised inheritance. At His voice the grave will yield up its



dead, and our bodies, made like unto His glorious body, and reunited to their purified spirits, shall be admitted to the glories of His eternal kingdom. What may be the precise nature of that kingdom, and whether or not it may be established in that new heavens and new earth of which St. Peter speaks, we presume not to conjecture. But these circumstances of it we may cheerfully leave with Him to whom, as a faithful Creator and most merciful Saviour, we have committed the keeping of our souls.

Thus, from the contemplation of the past fulfilment of the prophecies of Holy Scripture, do we derive not merely an argument against the unbeliever for the truth of our religion, but encouragement for our faith and hope in the prophecies and promises yet remaining to be accomplished, and on which our future happiness rests. And what *firmer* foundation for our faith can we desire, than the evidence afforded us in our present subject, that all the declarations of Holy Scripture shall be fulfilled in their season?

## SERMON X.

(*Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, February 1, 1857.*)

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JOHN I. 45.

*“ Philip findeth Nathaniel, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”*

IN the present Lecture, as I stated on a former occasion, I purpose considering the testimony afforded to the truth of Christianity by the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to the *time, place, and circumstances* of the Messiah's incarnation.

The value of fulfilled prophecy as an evidence for the Divine origin of the faith with which it is connected, greatly depends upon the precision and distinctness of the prediction. We have, therefore, to examine the language in which the *time, place, and circumstances* of the Messiah's appearance in the world were foretold, and see whether it was such as plainly to betoken a distinct foreknowledge of them, and also whether it found its accurate fulfilment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. It is clear, that however happy and ingenious might be the guesses of the human imagination as to the unseen future, no *definite* notices as to the time of the Messiah's appearance, or the



family from which He was to spring, or other similar facts, could be delivered, several centuries before his birth, but under the guidance of Divine prescience.

Now, such are the predictions we find in the Old Testament prophets relative to the birth of the Messiah. They are clear and definite announcements, such as could only have emanated from One to whom the future was visible equally with the present.

Let us proceed to examine them.

The *first* point, then, to which I would direct your attention is, that the incarnation of the Messiah was to be preceded and ushered in by the advent of a prophet dwelling in the wilderness, who was to prepare the minds of men for the advent of the great Deliverer. In the midst of one of those sublime descriptions of future mercies by which the prophet Isaiah was directed to comfort and encourage God's ancient people Israel, the inspired word thus testifies to the way in which the advent of the Messiah should be heralded:—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

And then, according to the usual course of the prophetic word, there immediately follows a metaphorical description of the effects of the Messiah's advent: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. . . . O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with

strength ; lift it up, be not afraid ; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him : behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd : He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Is. xl. 3—11.)

The true character of the Messiah and the glory of His kingdom are here spoken of, it will be observed, as they will appear when that kingdom is fully established in the earth.

And this leads me to notice incidentally a fact, the remembrance of which is of much importance to the student of prophecy.

It will be found, I think, to be a general characteristic of the prophecies of Holy Scripture, that the *ultimate consequences* of an event are spoken of in such immediate connexion with it as to lead a cursory reader to suppose that they were to follow directly upon it. Thus, for instance, the judgments predicted against some of the ancient cities and kingdoms, as to be fulfilled by certain individuals at certain periods, were often accompanied by statements indicative of their complete destruction and extinction, while, nevertheless, their *complete* extinction, as in the case of Babylon, was a work of *time* ; virtually accomplished by the first outpouring of the threatened judgment,—as the tree is virtually dead when a fatal disease has struck its root,—but gradually reaching its consummation.

So in the case of that kingdom which the Messiah



came to establish, a cursory reader of the prophecies might suppose, that the establishment of His kingdom of righteousness and peace was to be the *immediate* effect of His appearance in the world. And thus the Jews reasoned in the time of our Lord. They looked for the appearance of one who was to be, on arriving at man's estate, a great conqueror, who was to subdue all nations by force of arms, and erect a Jewish kingdom coextensive with the earth.

But with Him with whom a thousand years are but as one day, the ultimate effect of any event stands in immediate connexion with it; and though many generations of men may pass away between the event and the full accomplishment of its effects, the word of prophecy connects the two, as they are connected in the eye of God. The observance of this fact will, I think, afford us a clue to the interpretation of many of the prophecies, or at least preserve us from a mistaken view of them. Events spoken of in them in language which might betoken immediately consecutive events may be connected only as cause and effect are connected, not as it respects the succession of time.

But, to return to the point more immediately before us, the prophetic testimony of Isaiah as to the prophet who was immediately to precede the Messiah, was repeated with greater distinctness by the prophet Malachi. "Behold," says the prophet, speaking in the name of the Lord, "I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom

ye delight in." (Mal. iii. 1.) And again, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (iv. 5.)

Now, the <sup>appearance</sup> ~~birth~~ of our Lord was preceded by the <sup>birth</sup> ~~appearance~~ of a prophet exactly answering to this description. The angel that foretold His birth to Zacharias declared, that "he should go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just" (Luke i. 17), as the prophet Malachi had foretold of the prophet that was to precede the Messiah. And when the time came for his public ministry, he prepared the way of the Lord by "preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. iii. 1.) He replies to the inquiry concerning his character and mission in the words of Isaiah, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." (John i. 23.) His father Zacharias, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, hailed His birth with the declaration, "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." (Luke i. 76.) And our Lord himself testified of him, "This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. . . . And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." (Matt. xi. 10—14; Luke vii. 27, 28.)

Like Elijah, he sojourned much in the wilderness, and had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild



honey. (Matt. iii. 4.) His mission was, to proclaim the judgments of God against sin, and denounce the prevailing vices of the day; leading men to humiliation and repentance, and thus opening their hearts to receive the message of mercy through Christ. For it is not until we come to see the real evil of sin, and view it in the light in which God views it, that we can form any right estimate of the value of the work of Christ, or be persuaded to rest our hope of salvation solely on that work.

We must observe, next, the nature of the premonitions given as to the *race* and *family* from which the Messiah was to spring.

The first notice of this kind limits it to the descendants of Abraham. "In thee," said God to Abraham, "shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18.) From this time the word of prophecy gradually became clearer, limiting it first to the tribe of Judah, then to the family of Jesse, then to the descendants of David. (Gen. xlix. 10; Is. xi. 1; Ps. cxxxii. 11, lxxxix. 4, 27; Is. ix. 7; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15.) And of the descendants of David did our Lord undeniably spring.

Let us inquire, next, as to the description of the *place* where the Messiah was to be born, and see whether it is sufficiently definite to show accurate foreknowledge. On this point the prophecy of Micah at once presents itself to our view. "And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." (Mic. v. 2.)

The fulfilment is remarkable. The mother of our

Lord did not live at Bethlehem. But when the time of our Lord's birth was at hand, she was required to go with her espoused husband, for the purpose of taxation or enrolment, to Bethlehem; and while they were there, we are told, the days came that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first-born Son. (Luke ii. 4—6, &c.) And here apparently the Eastern Magi, guided by the direction of the star which they had seen in the East, and which came and stood over where the young child was, worshipped the infant, whom they recognized, even in the lowly manger, as being born King of the Jews. (Matt. ii. 1 et seq.)

Nor must we omit to notice the miraculous nature of our Lord's birth.

“Behold,” says the prophet Isaiah, “a *Virgin* shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Is. vii. 14.) And thus runs the angelic message to our Lord's virgin mother:—“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke i. 35.) And to the same effect her espoused husband Joseph is warned by the angel: “That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” And in accordance with the admonition he took her unto him, and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus. (Matt. i. 20 et seq.)

But the point which, above all others perhaps, demands our attention is, the premonition given as to



the *time* of the appearance of the Messiah. How far does prophecy throw any light upon this point? Is there any definite notice, which, while it left such a degree of obscurity upon the matter that men could not point with *certainty* to this or that year, and say in such a year the Messiah will appear, is sufficiently clear to show that it emanated from one to whom the precise time was fully known? That it should be veiled in a certain degree of obscurity was necessary for the accomplishment of God's purposes. Nor was it intended that prophecy should be *so clear* an indication of the future as to enable every man to foresee precisely the time and circumstances of subsequent events. And this characteristic of prophecy must be borne in mind by every one who would judge rightly of the force of the evidence afforded by its fulfilment to the truth of the revelation with which it is connected.

The first note of time was, like all the earliest prophecies of the Messiah, indefinite and obscure. Had it been revealed to the early patriarchs, that the world would have to wait for the coming of Christ for four thousand years, their faith would have been put to a severe test. Man, the creature of a few short years, would have regarded it as an indefinite postponement of the coming of the great Deliverer. The spirit of prophecy, therefore, was only *so far* vouchsafed at that time as to indicate certain circumstances which would accompany the coming of the Messiah. The purpose of prophecy was thus sufficiently accomplished. The people of God were taught to look to a future period of deliverance, and to feel themselves

to be under the superintendence of a Divine hand; and when the prophecy was accomplished, the terms of it were plain enough to indicate the source whence it proceeded.

Thus, Jacob, on his death-bed, declared,—“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” (Gen. xlix. 10.)

And such we find to have been the case. When our Lord appeared, the tribe of Judah still remained a distinct body, having magistrates and governors of its own, though under the supremacy of the Romans. Even during the captivity, the tribe of Judah remained a distinct people, and had a “Prince of Judah.” (Ezra i. 8.) All the other tribes had lost their power long before; the ten tribes when they were carried into captivity into Assyria, the tribe of Benjamin when it became united with that of Judah. The tribe of Judah remained, as it had been predicted, possessed of its own polity and its own rulers, though under a foreign supremacy, until our Lord came; and to him the gathering of the nations of the earth has been. Little as the circumstances of his incarnation seemed at the time to correspond with this prediction, we have seen it accomplished to a degree which leaves no doubt as to the complete fulfilment of it ultimately in all the glory which the word of prophecy connects with it.

And, as the prophecy seems also to intimate, not long after the coming of the Messiah the sceptre *did* depart from Judah. Jerusalem was taken, the city



and temple destroyed, and the whole Jewish polity completely broken up by the dispersion of the Jews, mostly in a state of slavery, throughout the earth. They have never since been one united body, under one form of government and polity, with magistrates to administer the law. Scattered in all the quarters of the earth, they have been without any ruler or government to connect them together as a body politic. In the language of another remarkable prophecy, they have been “abiding many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.” (Hos. iii. 4.)

But at a subsequent period, the notes of *time* given in the word of prophecy became more distinct.

That I may not, however, detain you unnecessarily on the point, I will confine my remarks to one remarkable prophecy of this kind—that of Daniel. To this highly-favoured prophet the angel of God was commissioned to make the following precise revelation of the time when the Messiah was to appear and fulfil his work on earth:—“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublous times.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” (Dan. ix. 24—27.)

A more definite and precise prediction could not be conceived; and this prophecy is in fact an accurate description of the time and circumstances of our Lord's appearance in the world, and the events with which it was accompanied.\*

The word translated *weeks* literally signifies *septenaries*, and may be referred either to *days* or *years*, as it is used in Scripture in both senses. Thus when Laban said to Jacob respecting Rachel, “Fulfil her week,” the context shows that the word means seven years. And in this case, the reference to the Messiah in the prophecy shows that we must here also understand the word to mean years. So that the seventy weeks of the prophecy embrace a period of 490 years.

The statement of the prophecy, then, as regards the time of the appearance of the Messiah, and of the events that were to mark his course, is this: that

\* For a full discussion of the meaning of this prophecy, and a vindication of that here given, see Note A. to Sermon x. in the Appendix.



from the time of the going forth of *a* commandment (for so the words should be translated) to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the appearance of the Messiah, the Prince, should be seven and sixty-two septenaries of years,—that is, 483 years; and that after those sixty-nine septenaries, and (as the words seem to imply) before another septenary had elapsed, the Messiah should be cut off; which event should be followed by the destruction of the city and temple. And during the last seven years of the 490, the Messiah was to establish a covenant with many, and in the middle year of the seven was to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. He was also, but at a time not precisely determined, to make the city desolate by a desolation that should last for a certain decreed period.

Now it appears from Scripture, that there were four commandments, or edicts, issued by the kings of Persia with reference to the rebuilding of Jerusalem; one by Cyrus, a second by Darius Hystaspes, and a third and fourth by Artaxerxes Longimanus; and as the prophecy does not state which is referred to, there was, until its fulfilment, a degree of obscurity remaining, sufficient, as might be expected from the usual phraseology of prophecy, to prevent the reader from knowing with certainty beforehand what would be the precise period of its fulfilment; while on its accomplishment, it was sufficiently definite to fulfil all the purposes of prophecy.

In endeavouring to ascertain, therefore, which of those edicts was the one referred to, we at once find, that it could not be either of the first two, for

the 490 years reckoned from either of them will not bring us even to the birth of Christ.

We proceed, therefore, to the third, which was granted to Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. Now it is capable of satisfactory proof, that the reign of Artaxerxes commenced in the summer or autumn of the year 464 before the *vulgar* Christian era, and consequently the seventh year of his reign extended from the summer or autumn of 458 to the same period in 457 of the same era. And as it appears, from the account given by Ezra himself, that he started from Babylon, in consequence of this edict, on the first day of the Hebrew month Nisan, occurring about the middle of our March, and after communications held with the whole body of the captive Jews, the edict must have been issued a little before this period, and consequently about the close of 458 B.C., or the beginning of 457 B.C.

The testimony of the prophecy, then, is, that the public appearance of the Messiah should take place 483 years from this time.

Now, it is obvious that the event to which we should naturally look as corresponding to that which is here predicted is, the first appearance of our Lord *as the Messiah*, which was at his baptism, when both human and Divine testimony was borne to his true character, and he was proclaimed to be the Son of God. This event took place, we are told by St. Luke (iii. 23), when He "began to be about thirty years of age." We have, therefore, to determine the precise period of our Lord's birth, which, though it is not expressly stated by any of the sacred writers, may be fixed sufficiently



for our purpose from the historical data they have given us connected with this event. The *vulgar* Christian era was, as is universally admitted, wrongly calculated by those who first introduced it as an epoch for reckoning the period of the events of history; and therefore, when we speak of the year A.D. 1, it is understood that this is not the true year of our Lord's birth.

Our Lord's birth must have taken place, according to the Evangelists, some little time before the death of Herod. And according to Josephus, Herod's death took place a few days after an eclipse of the moon, and a few days before a Passover. From these data we learn with certainty, that this event happened in the latter part of March, B.C. 4 (B.C. being understood to refer to the *vulgar* Christian era); a date which is confirmed by several historical testimonies. The Messiah was born, therefore, some little time previous to this.

But St. Luke also tells us, that our Lord's baptism, when He began to be about thirty years of age, was in the fifteenth of Tiberius. (Luke iii. 1.) And reckoning the years of Tiberius from the time when he was made by Augustus his colleague in the Empire (which St. Luke must have done, for otherwise his words would place the birth of our Lord after the death of Herod), his fifteenth year would extend from the summer of A.D. 26 to the summer of A.D. 27. And thirty years backward from this period would take us to the latter half of B.C. 5, or the former half of B.C. 4. As our Lord's birth, then, was some little time before March, B.C. 4, we are fixed to some period towards the close of B.C. 5. And con-

sequently our Lord was thirty towards the close of A.D. 26, and was baptized about the close of A.D. 26, or the beginning of A.D. 27; precisely 483 years from the period when, as we have already proved, the edict was issued in the seventh year of Artaxerxes.

But there remains another septenary of the prophecy, during which the Messiah was to be cut off; and of this septenary it is stated, that in it the Messiah should confirm the covenant with many,—that is, no doubt, of the Jews,—and that in the midst of it, or the middle year of the seven, he should cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; words which clearly intimate when the cutting off of the Messiah was to take place, because, on the offering of the antitype, the typical sacrifices of the Mosaic law were annulled, and practically, in the sight of God, ceased.

Now, though the precise period that elapsed between our Lord's baptism and his crucifixion is nowhere expressly stated, yet if we examine carefully the accounts given by the Evangelists, we shall find that this period must have somewhat exceeded three years; and as it is known that the Crucifixion took place at a Passover, we thus find it to have been in the spring of A.D. 30, that is, in the middle year of the last of Daniel's seventy septenaries.

And it is a remarkable fact, confirmatory of this date, that an ancient Jewish tradition preserved in the Babylonian Talmud, states, that on and after the great day of Expiation of this year,—a day which occurred annually in the autumn,—the signs that were considered the marks of the Divine acceptance of the offerings of that day were never vouchsafed.



That the Messiah established with many of the Jews during these seven years that new covenant He came to introduce, is a matter of history which will not be questioned, though there may be an uncertainty as to the precise point, in the narrative given us in the Acts of the proceedings of the primitive church, at which the seven years terminate. For though there was not a large number of converts to His Divine mission before his Crucifixion, yet for some time after we read of vast numbers of the Jews embracing the Christian covenant, particularly before the martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution that accompanied it; and about the same time the period of Divine mercy to the Jews seems to have closed, and with it the last septenary of this remarkable prophecy.

So striking is the evidence afforded by this prophecy, that it is said by a learned divine of our Church,\* as quoted by Archbishop Secker, “that if he had hitherto lived an infidel, the conviction wrought in him by a just consideration of the certain sense and perfect completion of this Divine oracle is so full, that he should think it his duty to do and suffer all that human nature, supported with Divine grace, could, rather than forfeit his faith.”

It is a remarkable fact, connected with the consideration of the time of our Lord’s appearance in the world, that not only were the Jews looking at that period for their promised Messiah, but there was a general expectation among the better informed of the *heathen* nations of the appearance of some one in the world

\* Johnson of Cranbrook in his Posthumous Works published in 1748.

about that time, who would found an empire coextensive with the earth, and introduce a state of universal peace and happiness. The way in which the Jews were dispersed, for the purposes of traffic, in various parts of the world, and consequently their sacred books made known to other nations, will readily account for such an expectation. And it is a strong confirmation of the view, that the language of prophecy *did* definitely point to that period of the world's history as the one during which the Messiah was to come.

The expectations entertained among the heathen of the appearance in that age of a great king who should possess universal dominion, and spread the blessings of peace and plenty throughout the world, are shown for the West by the Sibylline oracles, as referred to by Virgil and Suetonius, and for the East, not to mention the visit of the Eastern Magi to the infant Jesus, by the testimony of the same Suetonius, who tells us, in connexion with the early part of the reign of Vespasian, that "there had pervaded the whole East an old and firmly established persuasion, that it was decreed, that some who should come forth from Judæa at that time should possess the empire of the world." "This persuasion," he adds, to flatter the Emperor Vespasian, "though the event afterwards showed that it was a prediction concerning the Roman Emperor, the Jews applying to themselves rebelled."

There was a general expectation, therefore, throughout the world, lasting from rather more than half a century before the birth of Christ to the same period after that event, that some mighty and beneficent



Emperor of world-wide dominion should appear on the earth about that time.\*

The same expectation prevailed among the Jews of the advent, about that period, of the promised Messiah. This is clearly intimated in the language used by St. Luke respecting Simeon and Anna. The former was "waiting for the consolation of Israel;" the latter, after seeing the infant Jesus, "spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." (Luke ii. 25, 38.)

And that this was the firm persuasion of the Jews of that age, and animated them in their struggle with the Romans after our Lord's crucifixion, we are informed both by Tacitus and Josephus.

"Most of them," says Tacitus, "held the notion, that it was contained in the ancient writings of their priests, that it should come to pass at that very time that the East should prevail, and those who came forth from Judæa should possess the empire of the world." And like Suetonius he adds, not unnaturally for a Roman of that period, that "those obscure sayings had foretold Vespasian and Titus."†

And Josephus says, that that which chiefly excited them to undertake the war was an ambiguous prophecy, found in their sacred books, that about that time one from their country should obtain the empire of the whole world. And he also, though a Jew, falling in with the Romish spirit of flattery towards their emperors, hesitates not to apply it to Vespasian. "This prophecy," he says, "certainly signified the

\* See Note C. to Sermon ix. in Appendix.

† See Note B. to Sermon x. in Appendix.

rule of Vespasian, who was appointed Emperor in Judæa.”\*

And hence it was, that the age which witnessed our Lord's incarnation witnessed also the rise of so many impostors among the Jews pretending to be the promised Messiah.

The time, then, at which our Lord appeared was precisely *that* which a consideration of the prophecies respecting the Messiah had led the world to suppose would be the period of His advent.

But so little were men prepared for the *way* in which these prophecies were to be accomplished, that the promised Deliverer, when he came, was despised, persecuted, and crucified by his own brethren and nation. The world was looking for a mighty conqueror, a Cyrus or an Alexander, who by force of arms would subjugate all nations, and found an empire coextensive with the earth. The counsels of God lay concealed under a child born in a stable and cradled in a manger, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, whose visage was marred more than any man, and his form than the sons of men (Is. lii. 14, liii. 3), and who amidst the scorn and reproaches of his own countrymen died upon a cross as a malefactor.

Which of us would have recognized in that spectacle of apparent weakness and ignominious suffering the great promised Deliverer of mankind? And yet time has shown even the most sceptical, that at that very moment of seeming impotence and abject debase-

\* See Note C. to Sermon x. in Appendix.



ment He laid the foundations of a kingdom far more powerful than any that the earth has yet seen.

How little, my brethren, are we able to judge of the way in which God's purposes are to be accomplished! How different our views from those of the Divine mind!

The victories of the great promised Deliverer were to be obtained through his humiliation and suffering. His triumphs were to be triumphs over sin, death, and hell, and all the power of the great enemy of mankind. In this way only could the promised deliverance of mankind from the consequences of the Fall be effected, and our guilty race restored to that Divine favour which is the alone source of all real happiness.

But this was a lesson which men had never learnt till the Gospel of Christ revealed it to them, and which even now, alas! they are slow to receive.

Many other similar prophecies might be referred to, foretelling the time, place, and circumstances of the Messiah's appearance in the world, and all be shown to be clearly fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. But no impartial inquirer can, I think, need stronger evidence than what is afforded by those already adduced.

Having thus considered the point which forms the more especial subject of this discourse, we must not conclude without briefly noticing that wonderful theme of contemplation which it brings before us—the appearance in our nature, even in its lowest state of degradation and abasement, of the second Person

of the adorable Trinity. This is the great event which is the subject of all these prophecies. The Son of God taking upon him our nature, that he might suffer upon the cross the death which our sins merited, and die, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God, is the sum and substance of the prophetic word.

When we contemplate, then, these prophecies as evidences for the truth of Christianity and the Divine origin of our holy religion, we are but at the threshold, as it were, of that temple of truth which God has opened to us in His holy word; we are but viewing the *exterior*, and marking the solidity of the building and the firmness of the foundation on which it stands. We must *enter in* to know its value and see its beauty, or to derive any advantage from its protection. It is given us, in our course through this earthly wilderness, as a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat. It promises strength to the weak, rest and refreshment to the weary, comfort to the afflicted. Within it are the wells of salvation, the water of life, even life eternal. The holy Spirit of God dwells therein, and gives to all who enter with humility and reverence an interest in all the blessings and privileges with which it is stored. Let us not, then, content ourselves with a *cold* survey of the *exterior*, but thankfully press forward and enter in, and avail ourselves of that wonderful dispensation of mercy which God has so graciously provided for us.

What an appeal is it that He has made to us, in that he so loved mankind as to send his only-begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him



should not perish but have everlasting life. How great the guilt of a rejection of a scheme of salvation flowing from such unmerited love and mercy !

But, that we may be *benefited* by it, it is requisite that we accept it, in the spirit of penitence and faith, for the purposes for which it was designed. There is no better proof of the exclusiveness of that way of salvation which is through the atonement and mediation of Christ, than the fact, that the Son of God himself came into the world to be the Author of it. Such a mode of redemption is the strongest evidence of the state of ruin and condemnation into which man was plunged by the fall. The nature of the remedy shows the character of the disease.

And by this plan of salvation are shut out all the vain hopes, founded upon a vague notion of the mercy of God, by which some are inclined to deceive themselves. For if God spared not even His own Son when standing in the place of the sinner, but sent Him into the world that he might die upon the cross as an atoning sacrifice for the sin of man, how much less will he spare the impenitent sinner !

The great glory of the Gospel plan of salvation is, that by it all the attributes of God are made to harmonize in the salvation of the penitent believing sinner. Justice and mercy meet and co-operate in the work of human redemption. Through the incarnation of the Son of God to suffer in His own person the penalty due to sin, God can be just and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

## SERMON XI.

(Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, Nov. 29, 1857.)

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LUKE I. 68—70.

*“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David: as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began.”*

SUCH were the words with which Zacharias greeted the approaching advent of our Blessed Lord in the flesh. And they lead us directly to the subject matter for our consideration in this Lecture; in which I have undertaken to point out the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the character of the *person* and *mission* of the Messiah, and to show their fulfilment in Him to whom we look as our Saviour.

(1.) The first point to be noticed in the predicted character of the *person* of the Messiah is, that He was to be God as well as man.

The name of the child born and the son given was to be, according to Isaiah, “the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.” (Is. ix. 6.) The prophet Micah, in that remarkable prophecy to which the Jews referred Herod as foretelling the



birthplace of the Messiah, speaks of Him as one “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” (Mic. v. 2.) And the inspired Psalmist represents Him as being recognised by Jehovah as His Son. “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee” (Ps. ii. 7) ; and also as one to whom the incommunicable name *Jehovah* should belong,—“The Lord (*i. e.* Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Jehovah), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (Ps. cx. 1.)

The latter passage was quoted by our Saviour himself as showing, that the Messiah, though he was to be David’s son, was also to be David’s Lord ; and he asked the Pharisees for an explanation of this seeming contradiction. (Matt. xxii. 41—45.)

And St. Paul, while he claims Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah, expressly vindicates to the Messiah the character of a Divine person. Affirming that God had, in these last days, spoken unto us by His Son, in the person of Jesus Christ, he reminds us, that of that Son it is said in the Old Testament Scriptures, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom,” and, “Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands,” &c. (Heb. i. 8, 10.)

How far, then, does the character of Him to whom we look as our Saviour correspond to this predicted character of the Messiah ? For an answer to this question, we must refer to the account which history of undoubted authority has left us of His acts and teaching.

In reviewing this account, I pass over much which, if time permitted, I should have to bring before you, and confine myself to a few leading points in the evidence on this subject.

I would notice, then, first, the proof which our Lord gave, in His conversation with Nathaniel, of the possession of the attributes of God, as acknowledged at the time by Nathaniel himself. "Jesus," it is said, "saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathaniel [surprised at the knowledge thus exhibited of him by one who was altogether unknown to him] saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Our Lord thus showed that He was present at one and the same time in more than one place, a power which belongs to God alone. And such was the inference of Nathaniel himself, who immediately replies, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." (John i. 47 et seq.)

And as our Lord thus proved his possession of the attribute of *omnipresence*, so at other times he manifested his *omniscience*, in showing a knowledge of the thoughts of the hearts of men. When "certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth:" "Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" And He then showed his power to forgive sins by giving strength to the sick of the palsy, and bidding him rise and walk. (Matt. ix. 3—6.)



And we have the faithful testimony of His apostle John, that “He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.” (John ii. 24, 25.)

Further, by His miracles he showed His *omnipotence*. I would refer more especially, though not exclusively, to his miracles in *raising the dead*, as instanced in the case of the son of the widow of Nain (Luke vii. 11—15), the daughter of Jairus (Matt. ix. 18 et seq.; Mark v. 22 et seq.; Luke viii. 41 et seq.), and Lazarus (John xi. 38 et seq.) And the proof they afford of his omnipotence lies, it must be observed, not in the mere fact of the restoration of these persons to life,—because we find instances of resurrection from the dead at the word both of prophets and apostles,—but in the *way* in which it was accomplished. When Elisha was the instrument through whom the Shunammite’s son was restored to life, the miracle was effected through prayer to God. (2 Kings iv. 32—37.) When the Apostles performed miracles, they performed them all in the name of Christ,—“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” (Acts iii. 6.) “Jesus Christ maketh thee whole, arise and make thy bed.” (Acts ix. 34.) *These* are the words with which *Peter’s* miracles were performed. And when he would obtain the restoration of Dorcas to life, he kneels down and prays, and with prayer says, “Tabitha, arise.” (Acts ix. 40, 41.) It is through the power of Jesus Christ alone that they presumed to look for miracles to follow on their words.

But when our Lord performed his miracles, he

performed them as one who had all nature under his control. This it was that struck his hearers with amazement. Thus, when he cast out devils, it is said, "They were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this, for *with authority and power* he *commandeth* the unclean spirits, and they come out." (Luke iv. 36; Mark i. 27.) And this appeared to them altogether *a new* thing, though they knew the power of prayer and the invocation of Divine interference in casting them out.

So again, when he said to the stormy sea, "Peace, be still," and "there was a great calm," they said one to another, "What manner of man is this, for he *commandeth* even the winds and water, and they obey him." (Mark iv. 39—41; Luke viii. 24, 25.)

And when he performs the miracle of raising the dead, he does it with a word of power and authority that claims life and death at its own disposal. "Maid, I say unto thee, Arise." "Lazarus, come forth." *These* are the words with which *He* orders the course of nature to be reversed, and life to take the place of death. And in the latter case, in reply to the remarks of one who seems not to have realized his true character, he expressly claims the power which belongs to God only. When he promised Martha that Lazarus should rise from the grave, and she seemed to doubt whether this could take place before the resurrection at the last day, our Lord replies, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." (John xi. 25.)

And this leads me to the remark, that we have another proof of his divinity in the fact, that while



his life and character and miracles proved him to be from God, he claimed to be the Son of God in that sense which made the Jews accuse him of blasphemy, as "making himself," they said, "equal with God." (John v. 18.) He hesitates not to affirm also, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58); for which the Jews took up stones to inflict upon him the penalty which their law had denounced on blasphemers. And he applies to himself the prophecies of the Old Testament, in which the coming of a future *Divine Deliverer* is foretold. (Matt. xi. 10; John v. 46; Matt. xxi. 15, 16; John xii. 13—15; Luke xxiv. 27, 44—47.)

Now, if we admit, that his life and miracles show him to be even *trustworthy*, we must also admit, that these declarations, which could not be founded on any misapprehension, *must* be true, and consequently that even in the lowest depths of that humiliation to which he submitted in his human nature, he was, "Emmanuel, God with us."

(2.) Further, the Messiah was to be a powerful Conqueror and a glorious King. Both in the Book of Psalms and the writings of the Prophets we have such frequent predictions of this kind, that I need not detain you by more than this general reference to them.\*

Now, if we confined our view to what the world would be apt to understand by these words, we might indeed look round and say, Alas! where is the accomplishment of these prophecies in Jesus of Nazareth?

\* Ps. ii. 6, 7; lxxxix. 27, 36; cxxxii. 11. Is. ix. 6, 7; xxxii. 1; liii. 10, 12; xxxv. 4—6. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. Dan. vii. 13, 14, 27. Zech. ix. 9. Mic. v. 2.

If, with the Jews of old, we could see no other mode of accomplishing them but by the sword of war, and the establishment of a temporal sovereignty ruling over all the nations of the earth with a worldly sceptre, we might ask, with *them*, Where is the evidence that Jesus is the Messiah?

But is this the only conquest that man needs to be achieved for him? Is this the only kingdom which can be established among men? No, surely, there is a spiritual kingdom over the hearts of men, far more glorious and powerful than any that can be founded by the sword; there is a deliverance from the power of sin and Satan far more precious than freedom from temporal bondage. And by triumphs such as these we may, even now, before the full establishment of his kingdom, test the claim of the crucified Jesus to be the promised Messiah.

I touch not now upon those victories of our Blessed Lord by which the heavenly inheritance was regained for his followers, the conquests which his death achieved over the Powers of darkness in rescuing man from the curse of the Law, and bringing him again under a dispensation of Divine mercy; because my present subject confines me to the consideration of the *visible* accomplishment of the prophecies.

But I refer to the triumphs of that *spiritual kingdom* which our Lord has already established in the world. Much as there yet remains to be accomplished for the complete fulfilment of all the prophetic announcements on this subject, clearly has the remarkable prediction of Isaiah been verified, that there should be a root of Jesse, which should stand for an



ensign of the people; that to it should the Gentiles seek, and his rest be glorious (Is. xi. 10); or, as the Apostle cites the words, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust." (Rom. xv. 12.)

Though the *full* triumphs of Christianity are yet future, no impartial observer can deny, that a larger proportion of the earth's inhabitants profess subjection to His authority than ever owned the sway of any earthly monarch. The despised Jesus of Nazareth, who died upon a cross at Jerusalem as a malefactor, is already owned as their supreme Lord and King by many more than acknowledged the sovereignty of any Assyrian, Persian, Greek, or Roman Emperor.

Nor is it any ground for doubt or cavil, that the blessedness and the extent of His kingdom are not *yet* such as prophecy gives us reason to anticipate as their ultimate development. This is only what the same word of prophecy leads us to expect. The mustard seed progresses but gradually to the lofty tree. The little stone cut out without hands, in the prophetic vision, became but gradually the mountain that filled the earth. It is enough for us that we have sufficient testimony for the confirmation of our faith. The rest we leave to be fulfilled in its time.

A long period elapsed after the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, and their entrance into the land of Canaan, before the promised blessings were vouchsafed to them in the reign of Solomon. It was not till then that they had triumphed over their enemies in the land of Canaan, and possessed a temple

suitable for their worship. But the promises only awaited the appointed period for their fulfilment.

The word of prophecy itself leads us to expect, that certain earthly Powers will make war with the true and faithful people of God, and will to a considerable extent prevail against them, until the time comes when it pleases the "Ancient of days" to sit in judgment, and destroy their enemies, and give to "the Son of Man," the promised Messiah, "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." (Dan. vii. 9—27.) And the final triumph of the Messiah's kingdom, when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, will probably be accomplished by acts of Divine judgment upon the ungodly, as well as the merciful operations of Divine grace upon the hearts of those who are led to join the fold of Christ.

But if we wish to know the *value* even of that *partial* subjection to Christ which His nominal followers exhibit, we may test it by a comparison of the condition of Christendom with what the history of heathen nations shows us to be the state of man by nature. Contemplate the unfathomable depths of cruelty and wickedness to which man is capable of sinking in his natural state, and then estimate the blessings which even the partial and imperfect establishment of Christianity, which has been hitherto accomplished, has brought into the world.

But the power by which that kingdom of Christ which now exists is established is a spiritual and unseen power. "Not by might, nor by power, but



by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," is that work accomplished. (Zech. iv. 6.) The freemen of that kingdom "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The agents by which it is founded and maintained are the word and Spirit of God; that word that is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12); and that Spirit that convinces the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and bends the corrupt and stubborn will to the obedience of Christ.

And in the operations of these agents we see the proof, that He who once died upon the cross is, as he foretold, exalted to a heavenly throne, from which he rules that spiritual kingdom he establishes over the hearts of men. The power which he there exercises is a power which reaches the soul, purifies and elevates the affections, and gives new principles of action to men. And thus he fulfils those remarkable words in which he replied to the Pharisees who asked him, when the kingdom of God should come. "The kingdom of God," said our Lord, "cometh not with observation"—that is, it is not ushered in, as worldly kingdoms are, by external pomp and splendour;—"neither shall they say, lo here, or, lo there," as if it was confined to one place or nation, "for behold the kingdom of God is *within you*." (Luke xvii. 20, 21.)

(3.) Moreover, the Messiah was to be the bearer of

special tidings of mercy, and the author of manifold blessings, to the world.

Thus, for instance, speaks the prophet Isaiah in *his* person :—"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Is. lxi. 1, 2.)

Such is one of those prophetic announcements, of which so many occur in the Old Testament, in which the blessings which our Lord's advent was to bring to mankind are proclaimed.

Has, then, He to whom we look as our Saviour fulfilled this character?

I will not now dwell on his earthly ministrations, his miracles of healing, his compassion and works of mercy for his followers, or "the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." I need not pause to point out the nature of that religion He came to introduce among men, in its effects upon the happiness of mankind. All these give place to that spiritual deliverance He came to effect, and to proclaim, from the consequences of the Fall.

The message of mercy He brought to mankind was, that through him the way to God was again open, that the yoke of spiritual bondage under which man had placed himself was broken for all his followers, and their redemption fully accomplished.

How different the revelation made to us in his teaching, and that of his Apostles, of the aspect of



the Father towards our fallen race, than any which had *previously* been vouchsafed. *Before*, God had been on the throne of judgment, proclaiming, amidst the thunders of Sinai, his perfect law. *Here*, he is on the throne of mercy, waiting to be gracious to all who come unto him in the way of his appointment. Through the work of Christ, both Jews and Gentiles are brought nigh, by one Spirit, unto the Father. For Him hath God himself “set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God . . . . that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. iii. 25, 26.)

According, then, as we feel the true nature of that state of misery and condemnation, of captivity to sin and Satan, from which Christ came to rescue us, according as we estimate the value of that new creation to which He has begotten us, and of that future inheritance he has purchased for us, will be our sense of the value of the blessings he came to confer upon us. And if we rightly estimate these, we shall not hesitate to adopt the words of the prophets as descriptive of the benefits conferred by our Lord on his followers; we shall feel the full force of the claim which our Lord himself made to the reference of the words of Isaiah to himself, when, after reading them in the synagogue, he declared, “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke iv. 17—21.)

(4.) But, combined with these characteristics of the person and mission of the Messiah were to be *others*, which, to the eye of human reason, would ap-

pear *irreconcilable* with them. And by this fact is the weight of the evidence derived from this testimony increased tenfold.

Though the promised Messiah was to be a Divine Person, a powerful conqueror, and a glorious king, and to bring to man the most blessed tidings of Divine mercy, and be a minister of healing to the sick, comfort to the afflicted, and deliverance to the oppressed, He was also to be poor and despised, oppressed and persecuted by men, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," subjected to every species of ignominy and reproach, and at last wounded, and bruised, and cut off out of the land of the living. (Is. liii. throughout ; Psalm xxii. ; Is. l. 6.)

No human eye could have foreseen a character compounded of such apparent contradictions, a Being in whom such seemingly irreconcilable characteristics should all meet.

Are *these* characteristics, then, *also* to be found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? We have only to consult the records, not merely of the Apostolic writings, but of His enemies, to find abundant evidence on this point.

Behold the helpless infant lying, as the offspring of parents in the lowest grade of society, in a manger at Bethlehem. Could there be a condition of more abject poverty and weakness? True, the star pointed down upon him from above as the King of the Jews; the wise men from the East travelled from their far country to worship him, and pour out before him their offerings of frankincense and gold; and the angels proclaimed his advent to the shep-



herds, as bringing glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill to men; but, nevertheless, he had but a manger for his cradle, lying among the poorest of the poor, as a helpless child, dependent upon a mother's care.

The world heeded Him not. *They* were paying their court to the great, the noble, and the wealthy. His own highly favoured people, whose cherished oracles clearly proclaimed all the circumstances of his advent, looked upon him with disdain. The heathen poets, whom the faint gleam of ancient traditions, founded, no doubt, on the testimonies of the inspired prophets, had enabled to anticipate the advent at this very period of a great Deliverer and restorer of peace to the world, pointed to the Roman Emperor, as clearly fulfilling the predictions which had been so long the hope of the world.\* By none other, in the eyes of the world, could those prophetic announcements be fulfilled but by Him at whose will, apparently, peace reigned throughout the earth, and whose throne was supported by all the earthly elements of glory, majesty, and power. The nations of the earth had been subdued by him into a state of submission, and at his fiat, apparently, peace reigned. But was this the consequence of his will? No; the word of prophecy had foretold that such should be the state of the world when the Messiah appeared. The true Deliverer, the true Prince of peace, was the humble and despised babe in the manger at Bethlehem. Time has borne its witness, and will bear more abundant witness, to this fact.

\* See Note A. to Sermon xi. in Appendix.

Ah ! how *little* do we know of the true character even of the scenes in which we live, and the events that are happening around us ; how little can the human mind fathom the Divine counsels, or recognize, before the issue, the operations by which they are accomplished !

View him again wandering in the streets and mountains in and about Jerusalem, “not having where to lay his head.” True, at this very time he gave sight to the blind ; and one word from him calmed the stormy sea ; with authority and power he commanded the unclean spirits, and they came out ; and *his* summons brought back the departed spirit, in a moment, to its former mouldering tabernacle in the flesh. Glorified in the mount of Transfiguration, so as to dazzle the eyes of his disciples by the splendour of his appearance, he had the testimony from above, “This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” But from that same mount he descended to wander as a very outcast from society. (Matt. xvii. 2—5 ; Mark ix. 7 ; Luke ix. 35.)

As the prophetic Psalmist had foretold, he was “a stranger even unto his *brethren*, and an alien unto his *mother’s children*,” (Ps. lxix. 8,) for, as St. John tells us, “neither did his brethren believe in him.” (John vii. 5.)

View him finally as he wept tears of blood in the garden of Gethsemane ; as he went a prisoner, deserted even by his disciples, to the Judgment hall ; as he gave his back to the scourge and his head to the crown of thorns ; as he was nailed to the cross, and yielded up his life amidst all the external signs of abject helplessness.



True, even in that hour of apparent weakness he claimed power to obtain legions of angels for his defence (Matt. xxvi. 53); he healed with a touch one of his captors (Luke xxii. 51); he forewarned his judge that he would see him hereafter "sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64); and when he yielded up his spirit on the cross, such were the signs that accompanied that event, that even the Roman centurion and his companions "feared greatly, saying, Truly, this *was* the Son of God." (Matt. xxvii. 54.)

But nevertheless his outward condition is only that of a man of sorrows, given over to the will of his enemies, deserted apparently both by God and man.

His disciples, staggered at the apparent discrepancy between this scene of humiliation and suffering and the triumphs to which their eager hopes had led them to look forward, were ready to bewail the failure of all their expectations. "We trusted," they said, "that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke xxiv. 21), but now all hope of this seemed to them to be gone.

But herein, as they were soon taught, was the fulfilment of the Divine predictions in the person of Jesus of Nazareth most conspicuously manifested. "Ought not Christ," they were reminded, "to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" and they were referred to the predictions of Moses and all the prophets as showing that all that had recently happened at Jerusalem had been clearly foretold. (Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 44—46.)

We see, then, that in all these various points the person and character of him to whom we look as our Saviour correspond with the predictions of the Old Testament prophets respecting the Messiah, the Divine Deliverer, who, in God's appointed time, was to come into the world. In the person of Jesus of Nazareth, God, in the language of our text, has "raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as He spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began;" for, let us remember, that, as holy Simeon testified at His advent, he is "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of his people Israel." (Luke ii. 32.)

What is the conclusion, then, which we draw from all this evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the subject of one continued chain of prophecy from the beginning of the world, and that the nature of his person and work was accurately described by the prophets many centuries before his advent? *Reason* requires us to bow the knee before him, in humble submission to his authority, and thankful recognition of him in the character he claims to bear, and the offices he came to fulfil. With Thomas we are compelled to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." (John xx. 28.)

And then there follows of necessity our reverential acceptance of that whole revelation he has left us, in his own teaching and that of his apostles, of the way of salvation through his blood from the state of sin and condemnation in which we are by nature.



Time forbids me now to say more as to its nature and value. But I am persuaded that this is not needed. The Scriptures of the New Testament are in the hands of all of us. The way of salvation is as familiar to us as the home we live in. But let me earnestly press upon you the inquiry, whether we are living as those whom the great Deliverer of whom we have been speaking will hereafter own as his disciples.

We have been made the subjects of a dispensation of mercy, of a character so peculiar for its display of the Divine grace, that it is a theme of admiring contemplation, we are told, even to the hosts of heaven. A God incarnate suffering for sinners is a spectacle which, it might be supposed, could hardly fail to arrest the most hardened sinner in his course, and force reflection and repentance on the most thoughtless worldling. And such for a moment is often its effect even where it has no abiding influence.

But if we would experience the benefits which that atoning sacrifice brought to mankind, we must live as those who have placed all their hope of salvation upon it; daily pleading it before God for our acceptance, renouncing all hope of salvation on any other ground or plea, and living consistently with our professed character as the followers of Christ.

May God enable us thus to carry out and act upon our convictions of the truth for Jesus Christ's sake.

## SERMON XII.

(*Preached at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, January 10, 1858.*)

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ACTS. III. 18.

*“Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”*

IN the further consideration of the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah, as illustrative of the subject of these Lectures, I have now, in this final Lecture, to notice those which relate to *certain remarkable events* that were to happen to him, and to show their fulfilment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; and then conclude our review of the prophetic testimony to the Messiah with a few general remarks on the great truth thus brought before us.

The testimony of prophecy to the person and work of the Messiah is so full and minute, that it is difficult to compress even a brief survey of it within the compass of a few Lectures. I have been obliged, therefore, to confine myself to the consideration of some of the *leading points* in that testimony, and in so doing have brought before you, in former Lectures, first, its general nature and character; secondly, the prophecies relating to the time, place, and circum-



stances of the Messiah's incarnation; and thirdly, those relating to the character of His person and mission. And in the case of all these prophecies, we have seen how completely and accurately they were fulfilled in Him whom we acknowledge as our Saviour, and in Him alone.

But there remains a class of prophecies yielding to no others in the strength of the evidence they afford that our Lord Jesus Christ was the subject of prophecy many centuries before his incarnation, and consequently in the weight of their testimony to the Divine origin of Christianity—namely, those relating to *certain remarkable events* that were to happen to the Messiah during his incarnation.

The force of the evidence derived from prophecy lies more especially in the *minuteness* of its details. A prediction foretelling that certain remarkable and peculiar events would happen to an individual many centuries after its utterance, forms a more powerful proof of the Divine inspiration of the prophet, and of the fulfilment of the prophecy in the person of him to whom such circumstances happen, than many which may relate to events of greater intrinsic importance.

I now proceed, therefore, to the consideration of those prophecies relating to the Messiah that point out certain remarkable events that were to happen to Him during his abode on earth.

The word of prophecy will be found, on examination, to enter into various and minute details respecting the circumstances connected with the Messiah's earthly course, more especially with regard to his humiliation and sufferings, the mode of his death,

his resurrection and ascension, and their consequences and fruits.

It will be amply sufficient, however, for the purpose we have in view, to point your attention to some of the more remarkable of the occurrences thus predicted.

One of the most striking prophecies respecting the incidents in that work of suffering which the Messiah was to accomplish is to be found in Psalm xxii. In this Psalm, the writer, speaking in the person of the Messiah, says, "All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.'" (Ps. xxii. 7, 8.)

None of us can forget the way in which those who had no desire that these prophecies should be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, involuntarily made him their subject, when they mocked him in these very words, saying, "He trusted in God: let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." (Matt. xxvii. 43.)

Again, in the same Psalm, it is written, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Ps. xxii. 18.)

And in accordance with this prediction we find, that the soldiers who crucified Jesus "took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part;" and that for his coat, which was without seam, woven from the top throughout, they cast lots. (John xix. 23, 24; Matt. xxvii. 35.)

So the prophet Isaiah, speaking in the person of the Messiah, says,—“I gave my back to the smiters,



and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” (Is. l. 6.)

And thus did the Jews act towards our Lord. Upon his unjust condemnation “they did spit in his face and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands.” (Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 30; Mark xv. 19.)

The very minuteness of these details serves to place in a strong light the perfect prescience of the future that dictated to the inspired penman these minute particulars in the history of our Blessed Lord’s life.

Let us now turn to the celebrated prophecy contained in Isaiah liii.,—a prediction that forced belief on one of the most determined infidels of modern times,—and observe one or two of the minor incidents there mentioned as circumstances that were to occur in the person of the Messiah.

Notwithstanding his character, and the object for which he came into the world, he was to be “numbered with the transgressors” (Is. liii. 12), and to suffer death “with the wicked.” (ver. 9.) And thus was our Blessed Saviour crucified between two thieves ; and the Evangelist Mark justly refers to this fact as the evident fulfilment of “the Scripture which saith, ‘He was numbered with the transgressors.’” (Mark xv. 27, 28.)

But nevertheless the same prophecy tells us, that he was to be “with the rich in his death,” “because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.” (ver. 9.)

And thus we find, that, after his crucifixion, a rich man of Arimathea, one of his disciples, obtaining his

body, “wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb.” (Matt. xxvii. 57—60.)

Another remarkable incident in the earthly course of the Messiah is referred to by the prophet Zechariah. The prophet, speaking evidently in the person of the Messiah, thus alludes, in the enigmatical language suited to prophecy, to a circumstance which was to take place in connexion with Him:—“I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price, and if not, forbear; so they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.” (Zech. xi. 12, 13.)

The fulfilment of this prophecy in the person of our Blessed Lord took place through the acts of those who were his bitterest enemies. We find, from the accounts given by the Evangelists, that when his traitorous apostle Judas covenanted with the chief priests and elders to betray him unto them, they agreed to give for his price thirty pieces of silver; and after he was condemned, Judas, touched with remorse for his conduct, brought back the pieces of silver, and cast them down in the temple; upon which the chief priests took the silver pieces, and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. (Matt. xxvii. 3—10; Luke xxii. 3—6.)\*

That the facts thus recorded were the fulfilment of the prophecy uttered many centuries before by Zecha-

\* See Note A. to Sermon xii. in Appendix.



riah, can hardly be questioned by any impartial inquirer. They took place through the agency of those who ridiculed the idea of our Lord being the promised Messiah, and who, therefore, had no desire to aid the fulfilment of the prophecies in his person ; and yet the prophecy and the events we have referred to are of too remarkable and singular a character to permit of their being *disconnected*, as having no relation to one another. The common sense of mankind points at once to the connexion between the two, and stamps unbelief with the brand of folly. No man could stand before the bar of God, and there venture to deny that the one clearly referred to the other.

Another circumstance which was to characterize the Messiah was, that a bone of him was not to be broken (Ps. xxxiv. 24); but he was to be pierced (Zech. xii. 10). This was also foreshadowed in the treatment of the Paschal lamb, the well-known type of the Messiah. The direction given to the Israelites was, "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." (Exod. xii. 46 ; Numb. ix. 12.)

Now, in the case of those that were crucified with our Lord, we find that, shortly after their crucifixion, their legs were broken by the soldiers, and the soldiers came to our Lord for the same purpose ; but, when they "saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water."

This is recorded by the Apostle, who himself witnessed it, and who adds his well-grounded testimony, that "these things were done that the Scripture

should be fulfilled, 'A bone of Him shall not be broken:' and again another Scripture saith, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced.'" (John xix. 32—37.)

And these things, again, were not brought to pass through the hands of those who were interested in their fulfilment, but, on the contrary, through the agency of unbelievers.

Further, the earthly course of the Messiah was to be distinguished by another remarkable characteristic. He was to be laid in the grave, and yet not see corruption, as the Psalmist predicts in the 16th Psalm, verse 10. That this fact took place in the person of Jesus Christ, is a matter attested by historical evidence of greater weight than that upon which the universally received facts of civil history rest. And St. Peter thus argues with the Jews on the nature of the prophecy, and its accomplishment in the person of Jesus Christ. He reminds them that David could not have spoken of *himself* in these words, for that he was both dead and buried, and his sepulchre was with them to that day; but that "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that *his* soul was not left in hell, neither *his* flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." (Acts ii. 29—32.)

Many other similar prophecies might be added to these. But an accumulation of further testimonies of a like kind, none of which could be stronger than those already adduced, seems needless.



Now, to endeavour to realize the nature of the evidence derived from these prophetic statements, let us attempt to anticipate the events likely to occur in the history of some individual now living. Take the case of one whose general circumstances, powers, and views are well known, and who is engaged in the pursuit of some great object with which we are well acquainted. Take, in short, the case of one whose future course, and conduct, and circumstances we have the best chance of being able to anticipate.

We are stopped at the very outset of our attempt to look into futurity. A consciousness of our utter ignorance of what even to-morrow may bring forth seals our lips. We dare not affirm as a certainty, that he will even be in existence to-morrow.

In the light of this reflection, let us estimate the force of prophecy as evidence of the intervention of a Divine hand. We have before us a series of prophetic statements entering, many centuries beforehand, into the details of minute occurrences in the life of an individual predicted as about to appear on earth at a certain specified time. Can we look at it with the eye of reason, and fail to recognize in those prophecies, and the individual thus spoken of, Divine agency?

Let us now conclude our review of these prophetic statements respecting the Messiah, and their fulfilment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and the proof we thus obtain of the Divine origin of Christianity, with a few general practical remarks on the great truth which is thus brought before us.

I have already, in former discourses, offered some

observations of this kind. On the present occasion, therefore, I shall confine myself to what may suitably form our closing reflections on the great subject before us; namely, those that lead us to contemplate the greatness of that mercy that has been manifested to us in the gift of such a Deliverer.

In the necessity that existed for such a mode of effecting the salvation of man, we see the fallen state to which we had been reduced by sin. For, what was it that rendered the mediatory work of Christ necessary? Was it not, that man had so far departed from that original state of purity and innocence in which he had been created, that the infinite perfection of God forbade the acceptance of his fallen creature without some work of atonement, which, while it opened the way for an exercise of the Divine mercy, should manifest at the same time God's abhorrence of sin, and fixed purpose of visiting with its threatened punishment disobedience to His revealed will? Whatever God declares, the perfection of his nature requires that it should be accomplished.

He who takes a right view of the character of God as an infinitely perfect Being, and of the nature of disobedience as a sin against which God has denounced punishment, and moreover contemplates the *effect* of Christ's work of suffering to obtain man's acceptance, as a manifestation not merely to *man*, but to the *angelic hosts*, of the evil of sin, the consequences of disobedience, and the infinite holiness and immutability of their great Creator, will see in it an exhibition of Divine *mercy* as great as the manifestation it affords of the Divine *justice*. If we will attempt



to fathom the meaning of the Divine acts, we must take a larger view of them than to contemplate them solely as they affect ourselves. We must consider them as a part of the great system of God's government of the whole creation, and contemplate them with reference to their effects on the whole universe. Sin unpunished and pardoned, and the sinner left to sin again, and again be pardoned, would have offered an incentive to disobedience to myriads, more perhaps than the whole race of man from the world's beginning to its end.

The objections brought against the Scripture doctrine of the atonement often, probably, arise from the imperfection of human language in dealing with such subjects. We are unable to speak of God's acts in any other terms than those which we apply to the acts of man. We are obliged, therefore, to speak of God in language that might seem to imply human feelings and passions. Thus we say that the sufferings of Christ were a satisfaction to Divine justice for the sins of men—that the sufferings of Christ procured for us the Divine favour, and that through the sufferings of Christ the wrath of God against sinful man was appeased. But such expressions must be interpreted with a remembrance of the inadequacy of human language correctly to express the Divine acts. And to speak of such expressions as representing God to be vindictive, and to take delight in the sufferings of his creatures, rather argues a want of acquaintance with the *meaning* of the terms, than proves their incorrectness. In fact their use, as it respects the acts of *man*, might guard us against such a notion.

When a criminal suffers death, we say that his life is taken from him as a satisfaction for his disobedience to the law he has broken; but we do not mean that he who decrees that penalty derives any satisfaction from the sufferings so borne, or has any pleasure in viewing them. But the interests of society demand, that the law should not be violated with impunity, even though the criminal be sorry for his offence.

View the sufferings of Christ in this light, and you will see that they are the most wonderful illustration that we can conceive of all the attributes of a perfect Being—not merely of his *justice*, but of his regard for the best interests of *all his creatures*, and therefore of his lovingkindness.

And in this is seen the extent of the Divine mercy, in that God was willing to accept a substitute on our behalf, vicarious obedience and suffering from one who voluntarily put himself in our place, and in our stead subjected himself to the condemnation we had deserved; and more especially in the fact, that that substitute was one of the Persons in the Godhead; that He who came to suffer and to die for us in his human nature, was God as well as man, the Eternal Son of the Father.

Well may the work of redemption be spoken of as *a mystery* (Eph. vi. 19, &c.),—a subject “into which the angels desire to look.” (1 Pet. i. 12.) The race of man has been made the object of a work of mercy, which even the hosts of heaven, long accustomed to behold the varied outgoings of the lovingkindness of God towards his creatures, behold with wonder, and feel delight in contemplating.



And yet how little is there comparatively, in the great mass of those for whom this work was accomplished, of a similar feeling ! How cold, how languid are the feelings of most of us towards our great Benefactor ! How little practical influence is that work allowed to exercise upon us ! Redeemed from that state of ruin and condemnation in which we were by nature, by the blood of the Son of God, having the promise of His Spirit to enlighten our ignorance, to support us in our trials, to guide us on our path to the eternal world, with a hope held out to the followers of Christ full of glory and immortality, we suffer the toys of earth, the trifles of time and sense, to blind our eyes to all other considerations but what present objects set before us. Each is going to his favourite occupation or amusement, and all seek to be excused from that following of Christ that takes their minds off from the things of earth, and involves any denial of the cravings of the earthly mind. And thus the salvation offered to us is, too often, treated with indifference and neglect.

Let us contemplate for a moment what it is towards which we are thus cold and careless. It is a state in which our nature, perfected in all its powers and sensibilities, and made meet for the fruition of the Divine presence, will enjoy uninterrupted union and communion with the Source of all good throughout eternity. The tabernacle of God, we are told, shall then again be with men, and He will dwell with them.

On the particular nature of the scenes and occupations of the heavenly world, I will not venture one

word of anticipation. The faint foreshadowings of it given us, here and there, in Holy Scripture, are clearly, to a great extent, of a figurative kind, suited to our present habits and modes of thought.

It is enough to know, that our transformation after the Divine image, as it existed in the risen and glorified body of our Saviour, will be complete, and the world in which we shall be permitted to dwell be conformable to that renewed condition of being; and that the state of existence in which we shall thus be placed will be eternal.

And if a doubt is ever apt to cross our minds as to the reality of these great and glorious anticipations, we have surely, in that *already fulfilled word of prophecy* which we have been contemplating, enough to reassure us, and convince us, that God's word is amply sufficient foundation for our faith. "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Numb. xxiii. 19.)



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# APPENDIX.

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# NOTES.

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## NOTES TO SERMON II.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON II. (*Page 38.*)

FROM these passages (Mic. iv. 10 ; Zech. ii. 6, 7 ; xiv. 2) it seems probable, that there will be a future destruction of the rebuilt city of Jerusalem, and a deportation of a portion of the Jews, its inhabitants, to Babylon. But soon after this there seems to be predicted a miraculous interference in their behalf. (See Zech. xiv. 3, 4.) It seems also to be implied in Zech. xiii. 2, that after the restoration of the Jews to their own land there will be a return to idolatry in the case of some of them.

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### NOTE B. TO SERMON II. (*Page 39.*)

The case was that of a woman eminent for her family and her wealth, who had fled from a neighbouring village to Jerusalem for safety, and was shut up there during the siege ; and in a paroxysm of excitement and hunger killed her own son, a child sucking at her breast, and having roasted the dead body, ate a portion of it, and offered the remainder to some who were attracted by the smell of food. The horrible details are to be found in Josephus, *De Bell. Judaic. lib. vi. c. 3. §§ 3, 4.* Op. ed. Hudson. tom. ii. pp. 1274, 1275.

NOTE C. TO SERMON II. (*Page 42.*)

Volney's Ruins; or, a Survey of the Revolutions of Empires, ch. ii. 5th ed. Lond. 1807. 8vo. p. 7.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON II. (*Page 43.*)

As, for instance, by Voltaire in his History of the Crusades (*Œuvres de Voltaire*, xxvii. 107), as quoted by Bp. Newton, in his Dissert. on the Prophecies, diss. 8, and Keith's Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion from the fulfilment of Prophecy, ch. 5, p. 109, 36th ed. 1848. 8vo.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON II. (*Page 43.*)

The testimonies of Hecataeus (as preserved by Josephus), Tacitus, and Ammianus Marcellinus, are amply sufficient to prove this. Judæa is spoken of by Hecataeus as *τῆς ἄριστης καὶ πανφορωτάτης χώρας*. (Apud Joseph. *Contra Apion*. lib. i. § 22. ed. Hudson. tom. ii. p. 1348.) Tacitus says of it, "*Rari imbres, uber solum. Exuberant fruges nostrum ad morem; præterque eas balsamum et palmæ.*" (*Hist.* lib. v. c. 6.) Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of it as "*cultis abundans terris et nitidis.*" (*Lib.* xiv. c. 8. § 11.)

Its present barrenness, indeed, seems rather to arise from the want of proper cultivation than from any essential badness of soil. (See the accounts given by Maundrell, Dr. Shaw, and other more recent travellers.) And this is quite consistent with the language of prophecy, which only asserts what the condition of the land should be.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON II. (*Page 43.*)

Among the numerous works that have been published on this subject by recent travellers in the East, I may mention Robinson's Biblical Researches, Wilson's Lands of the Bible, Alexander Keith's Land of Israel, and the same



author's *Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion from the Literal Fulfilment of Prophecy*, 36th ed. Edinb. 1848. 8vo. pp. 100—243; in which last work there is an able survey of the principal prophecies relating to the state of Judæa after the dispersion of the Jews, and of the testimonies of modern travellers, to which he has added his own, bearing witness to their exact fulfilment. In Vol. iii. of the first named work there is a copious list of the ancient and modern works that have been published respecting the Holy Land.

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### *NOTES TO SERMON III.*

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#### NOTE A. TO SERMON III. (*Page 48.*)

THE precise period from the going down into Egypt to the Exode was 215 years, the interval between the call of Abraham and the Exode being 430 years. That we must understand the passage in Exod. xii. 40, 41, which states that “the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years,” as applying to the whole of this period, is clear from St. Paul’s statement in Gal. iii. 16, 17, that the law was 430 years after the covenant made to Abraham. The “sojourning” spoken of refers to the whole time of the sojourning of Abraham and his seed in lands where they were strangers and for a time captives, and therefore extends from the period of Abraham’s departure from Chaldaea to that of the deliverance of his race from this state of trial. The same explanation also must be applied to Gen. xv. 13, 16, and to the citation of it by Stephen in Acts vii. 6.

Josephus, also, in one part of his works (*Antiq.* ii. 15. 2), confirms this reckoning.

For further arguments in its favour, see Clinton's *Fasti Hellen.* vol. i. pp. 297—301. ed. Oxf. 1830.

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NOTE B. TO SERMON III. (*Page* 55.)

See H. Prideaux's *Old and New Testament connected, &c.*, vol. i. sub anno B.C. 596. p. 97. ed. Oxf. 1820.

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NOTE C. TO SERMON III. (*Page* 57.)

See H. Prideaux's *Old and New Test. conn. &c.*, vol. i. sub anno B.C. 584. p. 123. ed. Oxf. 1820. Also, *Josephi Antiq.* x. 9. 7. Op. ed. Hudson. tom. i. p. 454.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON III. (*Page* 60.)

See *Josephi De Bell. Judaic.* lib. iv. c. 5. Op. ed. Hudson. tom. ii. pp. 1182—1185. I have quoted in the text from Whiston's translation.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON III. (*Page* 62.)

See Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land.* Lond. 1822. 4to. pp. 444, 445. The journey was in 1812.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON III. (*Page* 63.)

Volney, speaking of this part of Syria, says, — "This country has not been visited by any traveller, but it well



merits such an attention . . . . [there are] within three days' journey upwards of thirty ruined towns absolutely deserted. Several of them have large edifices with columns. . . . The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them, on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm." (Volney's *Travels through Syria and Egypt* in 1783—5. Transl. 2nd ed. Lond. 1788. vol. ii. pp. 344, 345.)

See, for further accounts of the modern state of Idumea,—*Ulr. Jac. Seetzen's* Brief account of the countries adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan, and Dead Sea. Lond. 1813. 4to.—*J. L. Burckhardt's* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land. Lond. 1822. 4to.—*Irby and Mangles' Travels* in Egypt and Nubia, Syria and Asia Minor, during the years 1817 and 1818. Printed for private distribution. Lond. 1822. 8vo.—*Lord Lindsay's* Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land. 3rd edit. Lond. 1839. 12mo.—*Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée*, par Mess. Léon de Laborde et Linant. Paris.

The evidence derivable from such sources has been so well traced out by Dr. Keith in his well-known work on the "Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion from the literal fulfilment of Prophecy," (of which the best edition is the 36th, Edinb. 1848. 8vo,) that it would be useless to give another similar summary of it here.

For indications that some of the prophecies respecting Idumea may point to events yet future, see *Is. xxxiv. 5, &c.*

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NOTE G. TO SERMON III. (*Page 64.*)

See Sir I. Newton's "Chronology of Antient Kingdoms," p. 212.

## NOTES TO SERMON IV.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON IV. (Page 72.)

See HEROD. Hist. lib. i. § 191. ed. Oxon. 1817. p. 114; and XENOPH. Cyrop. lib. vii. ed. Hutchinson. 1730. pp. 401—410.

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### NOTE B. TO SERMON IV. (Page 74.)

Νῦν δὲ ἐξ ἀπροσδοκήτου σφι παρέστησαν οἱ Πέρσαι· ὑπὸ δὲ μεγάθεος τῆς πόλιος, ὥς λέγεται ὑπὸ τῶν ταύτῃ οἰκημένων, τῶν περὶ τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς πόλιος ἐαλωκότων, τοὺς τὸ μέσον οἰκέοντας τῶν Βαβυλωνίων οὐ μανθάνειν ἐαλωκότας, ἀλλὰ (τυχεῖν γάρ σφι ἐοῦσαν ὀρτὴν) χορεύειν τε τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον, καὶ ἐν εὐπαθείῃσι εἶναι, ἐς ὃ δὴ καὶ τὸ κάρτα ἐπύθοντο. καὶ Βαβυλὼν μὲν οὕτω τότε πρῶτον ἀραίρητο. HEROD. Hist. i. 191. ed. cit. p. 114.

In a previous passage Herodotus gives to Babylon the same dimensions as Diodorus Siculus ascribes to Nineveh, namely 480 stadia (κέεται ἐν πεδίῳ μεγάλῳ, μέγαθος ἐοῦσα μέτωπον ἑκάστου εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίων, ἐούσης τετραγώνου· οὗτοι στάδιοι τῆς περιόδου τῆς πόλιος γίνονται συνάπαντες ὀγδῶκοντα καὶ τετρακόσιοι. § 178. p. 106.)

But the other accounts we have of it ascribe to it rather smaller dimensions. According to Strabo, it was 385 stadia in compass. (STRABO, Geogr. p. 1072. ed. Amstel. 1707.) Quintus Curtius fixes it at 368, and states that a portion of the enclosed space was cultivated, so as to supply the inhabitants with food during a siege. (Totius operis ambitus 368 stadia complectitur. . . . Ac ne totam quidem urbem tectis occupaverunt, per nonaginta stadia habitatur, nec omnia continua sunt; credo, quia tutius visum est pluribus locis spargi. *Cætera serunt coluntque*, ut si externa vis ingruat, obsessis alimenta ex ipsius urbis solo subministrent.



Q. CURT. De reb. gest. Alex. lib. v. c. 4. ed. Maittair. Lond. 1716. p. 82.) Diodorus Siculus gives its dimensions as 360 stadia. (DIODOR. SIC. Bibl. Hist. lib. ii. § 7. ed. Wes-seling. tom. i. p. 120.)

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NOTE C. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 75.*)

Οἱ Βαβυλώνιοι . . . ἐσσωθέντες τῇ μάχῃ κατειλήθησαν ἐς τὸ ἄστυ. HERODOT. Hist. lib. i. § 190. ed. cit. p. 113. See also XENOPH. Cyrop. lib. vii. loc. cit.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 75.*)

Τάξας τὴν στρατιὴν ἅπασαν ἐξ ἐμβολῆς τοῦ ποταμοῦ, τῇ ἐς τὴν πόλιν ἐσβάλλει, καὶ ὅπισθε αὐτὶς τῆς πόλιος τάξας ἐτέρους, τῇ ἐξίει ἐκ τῆς πόλιος ὁ ποταμὸς, προεῖπε τῷ στρατῷ, ὅταν διαβατὸν τὸ ῥέεθρον ἴδωνται γενόμενον, ἐσιέναι ταύτῃ ἐς τὴν πόλιν. HEROD. Hist. lib. i. § 191. p. 114. The city was thus taken at the same time at the two opposite ends.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 76.*)

HERODOTUS, loc. cit. in Note B. above. Ἑορτὴν . . . ἐν ᾗ πάντες Βαβυλώνιοι ὅλην τὴν νύκτα πίνουσι καὶ κωμάζουσιν. XENOPH. Cyrop. loc. cit. p. 404.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 77.*)

Ὁ μὲν, προβαλλόμενός τι, ὁ δὲ, φεύγων, ὁ δέ γε, καὶ ἀμυνόμενος ὅτῳ ἐδύνατο. XENOPH. Cyrop. loc. cit. pp. 408, 9.

And in the context the historian thus shows the fulfilment of the prophecy that the two-leaved gates leading into the interior of the palace should be opened before Cyrus by kings; for, when Belshazzar, who was in the midst of a feast, surrounded by kings and princes, heard the noise of the conflict outside the gates,—κελεύσαντος τοῦ βασιλέως

σκέψασθαι τί εἴη τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἐκθέουσί τινες ἀνοίξαντες τὰς πύλας.

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NOTE G. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 77.*)

‘Ο δὲ Κῦρος διέπεμπε τὰς τῶν ἱππέων τάξεις κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς· καὶ προεῖπεν, οὓς μὲν ἔξω λαμβάνοιεν κατακαίνειν· τοὺς δὲ κ. τ. λ. XENOPH. *ibid.* p. 409.

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NOTE H. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 78.*)

Δαρεῖος δὲ ἐπεὶ τε ἐκράτησε τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, τοῦτο μὲν σφραγίσας τὸ τεῖχος περιεῖλε, καὶ τὰς πύλας πάσας ἀπέσπασε. HEROD. *Hist. lib. iii.* (*Thalia*) § 159. *ed. cit. i.* 334.

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NOTE I. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 79.*)

“I found the whole face of the country covered with vestiges of building, in some places consisting of brick walls, surprisingly fresh, in others merely of a vast succession of mounds of rubbish of such indeterminate figures, variety, and extent, as to involve the person who should have formed any theory in inextricable confusion.” “The ruins . . . consist of mounds of earth formed by the decomposition of building, channelled and furrowed by the weather, and the surface of them strewed with pieces of brick, bitumen, and pottery.” (*Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, by C. J. Rich, Esq. Lond. 1815. 8vo. pp. 2. 20.*)

“The ruins of Babylon are then [*i.e.* when the Euphrates is at its height] inundated so as to render many parts of them inaccessible, by converting the valleys among them into morasses.” (*Ib. p. 13.*)

“All the people of the country assert, that it is extremely dangerous to approach this mound after nightfall on account of the multitude of evil spirits by which it is haunted.” (*Ib. p. 27.*) “There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts . . . and in most of the cavities are numbers of bats and owls.” (*Ib. pp. 29, 30.*)



A "Second Memoir" was published by Mr. Rich in 1818, containing further details on the same subject.

The following description of the present aspect of the ruins of Babylon is from the pen of Lieut.-Gen. Chesney, who has kindly permitted me to copy it from his MS. He has visited them more than once within the last few years:—  
 "Nowhere have I seen the desolating effects of time so vividly brought before me as when gazing on the remains of this once mighty city; and the realization of the Prophet's words, 'Babylon the great is fallen,' recur to the mind with thrilling force. . . . Westward, where *inundations* appear to have left few ruins, the extent of plain is scarcely broken by a few remains at Anana. . . . Beyond these the celebrated Biris Nimrud appears in the distance. . . . The eastern side of the ruins of Babylon presents an uninterrupted monotonous line of a pale, blanched, brown colour. . . . The first of these ruins, called by the Arabs *Babel*, has the appearance of a massive fort with a tower at each angle. It is an immense pile of unbaked brickwork, having a square superficies of 120,000 feet, and a height of only 28 feet. It was probably the basement on which stood the citadel. . . . I descended near the base of the ruin . . . I was searching for the tunnel described by Herodotus as having passed under the ruin, when I came upon an arched subterranean passage constructed of bricks and bitumen, leading to an apartment or pit. It passed for 'the den of lions,' and was evidently the retreat of those animals, one of which I had seen prowling about the ruins a day or two before. The Arabs refused to enter this subterranean passage. I explored it for some distance, but was deterred from penetrating to the end by the strong odour of wild beasts. . . . The Kasr, which is the most remarkable portion of the ruins, is the *Mujellibeh*, or *overturned* of the Arabs. Its walls are high and of kiln-dried bricks in a more perfect state than those which form the other *mounds of ruins*. Constant excavations for these bricks therefore go on. . . . The Kasr was one of the Palaces of the kings of Babylon. Adjoining it are the

remains of the hanging gardens. Massive blocks of solid masonry, which once supported the slopes leading to the different terraces, identify their position. One solitary tree, a tamarisk, still remains. Beyond is the *mound* of Amram Ibn Ali, having an area of 104,000 feet, and an elevation of 23 feet. It has been plausibly identified with the Western Palace.

“The rest of these ruins consist of a succession of *naked mounds* on the eastern side of the river, which, supposing them to represent one-half of the city, would correspond, in point of extent, with its limits as given by the ancients. These mounds consist of enormous bricks of both sun and kiln-dried clay, more or less decomposed. . . . The bricks of the Kasr are in almost every instance stamped with the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar. . . . The rest of the space within the limits of Babylon, a circumference of more than thirty miles, is covered with masses of ruins. These are less distinguishable on the western bank of the river, where its inundations would naturally have carried away a great portion of the remains. But, about five miles S.W. of Hillah, the most remarkable of all the ruins, the *Birs Nimrud* of the Arabs rises to a height of 153 feet above the plain from a base covering a square of 400 feet, or almost four acres. It was constructed of kiln-dried bricks in seven stages to correspond with the seven spheres, their respective colours corresponding with the planets to which they were dedicated: the lowermost black, the colour of Saturn; the next orange, for Jupiter; the third red, for Mars; and so on. These stages were surmounted by a lofty tower, on the summit of which we are told were the signs of the Zodiac and other astronomical figures; thus having (as it should have been translated) *a representation of the Heavens*, instead of ‘a top which reached unto Heaven.’ This temple, which has also been connected with Borsippa by Mr. Ainsworth and others, I believe to have been originally the temple of Belus, and specially dedicated to Nebo or Mercury. It was restored by Nebuchadnezzar, whose name it bears on the bricks and on the cylinders deposited at its angles.



“It seems clear to me that this ruin came within the limits of ancient Babylon, which, according to Herodotus, embraced an area of 120 stadia, or fourteen miles each way, which would be at least five times the size of London; but this of course includes gardens, which are often of considerable extent, parks, orchards, and even fields, as in most Eastern cities. Literally indeed have the predictions of Scripture been fulfilled upon Babylonia and her capital. ‘Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. . . . It shall never be inhabited . . . neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, &c. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there.’

“It is remarkable that hundreds of owls and numerous jackals dwell among the ruins of Babylon. Babylon is altogether deserted. The Arabs regard the place with superstitious dread, whilst its immediate vicinity is rich and productive, both in dates and wheat, which is largely cultivated in the adjoining tracts called El Nil.”

More detailed accounts of the ruins of ancient Babylon may be found in Sir R. K. Porter’s *Travels*, Buckingham’s *Travels*, Mignan’s *Travels*, and several other works of a similar kind.

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NOTE K. TO SERMON IV. (*Page 80.*)

In speaking of “a temporary revival of Babylon,” I mean that a city may be built on or near the site of ancient Babylon, and have that name given to it. In this there would be nothing at all inconsistent with the full and literal fulfilment of such passages as Jer. l. 39, announcing of ancient Babylon that it should be “no more inhabited for ever,” and Jer. li. 63, 64, that it should be “desolate for ever,” &c., because the destruction of *ancient* Babylon has been *complete*. If a city was built on or near its site, it would be not only an entirely new city, but belonging to a different people.

The chief ground on which the supposition rests, that another Babylon may rise, is the way in which a city called Babylon is connected with the events that are to happen to the Jews at a future period in some of the prophecies of the Old Testament. And that the Babylon referred to is not Rome, is clear from its being associated in those prophecies with Assyria. That Rome is sometimes in the New Testament Scriptures called Babylon, by a mystical and figurative use of the name, is very probable. But Rome would clearly not answer to the Old Testament prophecies of that Babylon that seems associated with the future fortunes of the Jews. Rome is the Babylon of the Christian Church, as the ancient Babylon was of the Jewish.

Prophecies that distinctly connect Babylon with the events that are to happen to the Jews at a future period are Micah iv. 10, and Zech. ii. 6, 7. And the association of Assyria with those events is clear from Mic. v. 5, 6 ; Zech. x. 10, 11, &c., and apparently from Isaiah xiv. 25. W. Louth, in his Commentary on Mic. v. 5, ("when the Assyrian shall come into our land," &c.) observes, "The sense which Mr. Mede has given to this passage appears most agreeable to the scope and design of the following part of the chapter. He expounds the place of the general destruction of some remarkable enemy or enemies to God and His truth, which should come to pass before the consummation of all things : an event foretold in several places of Scripture. See Ps. cx. 5, 6 ; Isai. xxvi. 20, 21 ; xxxiv. 1, &c. ; lxvi. 16 ; Jer. xxx. 7, 10 ; Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix. ; Joel iii. 9, 14 ; Obad. ver. 15, &c. ; Zeph. iii. 8 ; Hag. ii. 22 ; Zech. xii. 1 ; xiv. 8 ; Rev. xix. 19 ; xx. 9. This enemy is probably called by the name of the Assyrian in Isaiah, chap. xiv. 25, as well as by Micah here."

If we read together Is. xi.—xiv., it seems probable that all the prophecies there have a reference to times yet future, and it would seem that xix. 4 et seq. (observe particularly verse 13) relates specially to the future "wilful king," the great Antichrist.

And if Is. xiv. refers specially to a future Babylon, then



vv. 22, 23 show the destruction that awaits it:—"I will . . . cut off from Babylon the name and remnant and son and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction." Thus future Babylon (should it arise) will perish like the Old, *as the enemy of God's people.*

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NOTE L. TO SERMON IV. (Page 83.)

Ἐνόμιζε δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ αὐτῷ ἀσκησιν εἶναι τῆς ἀρετῆς. Οὐ γὰρ ᾧετο οἷόν τε εἶναι, μὴ αὐτόν τινα ὄντα οἷον δεῖ, ἄλλους παρρησῶν ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ καὶ ἀγαθὰ ἔργα . . . ἐλογίζετο, εἰ πάντες οἱ κοινῶνες θεοσεβεῖς εἶεν, ἦττον ἂν αὐτοὺς ἐθέλῃν περὶ τε ἀλλήλους ἀνόσιόν τι ποιεῖν καὶ περὶ αὐτὸν . . . καὶ αἰδοῦς δ' ἂν ἡγείτο μᾶλλον πάντας ἐμπιπλάναι, εἰ αὐτὸς φανερός εἴη πάντας οὕτως αἰδούμενος, ὥς μήτ' εἰπεῖν ἂν μήτε ποιῆσαι μηδὲν αἰσχρόν . . . Καὶ ἐγκράτειαν δὲ οὕτω μάλιστα ἂν ᾧετο ἀσκεῖσθαι, εἰ αὐτὸς ἐπιδεικνύοι ἑαυτὸν μὴ ὑπὸ τῶν παραυτίκα ἡδονῶν ἐλκόμενον ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλὰ προπονεῖν ἐθέλοντα πρῶτον σὺν τῷ καλῷ τῶν εὐφροσυνῶν. XENOPH. Cyrop. lib. viii. prope init. ed. cit. pp. 432—438.

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NOTES TO SERMON V.

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NOTE A. SERMON V. (Page 88.)

ROBINSON'S Biblical Researches, iii. 407. The same testimony is borne by another careful observer on the spot in the year 1823, the Rev. W. Jowett, who says, speaking of the site of ancient Tyre, "On this deserted shore, not one sight, not one sound remains, to bear witness to her former joyous-

ness and pride . . . . of ancient Tyre there just remains that utter *nothing* which seems best suited to prepare the Christian for imbibing the spirit of the prophetic language.” (Jowett’s *Christian Researches*. 2nd ed. 1826. p. 136.) The same testimony was borne more than a century ago by Bishop Pococke, who says, — “There are no signs of the ancient city, and as it is a sandy shore, the face of everything is altered.” (*A Description of the East, &c.* Vol. 2. Pt. 1. p. 81. Lond. 1743. et seq. fol.)

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NOTE B. TO SERMON V. (*Page 88.*)

It is clear, from the accounts left us by ancient authors, that there was a Continental Tyre on the sea-coast and an Insular Tyre. But as to the precise periods of their foundation, and their mutual connexion, there is some uncertainty. It has been supposed by some, that the island had but few inhabitants until after the capture of Continental Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. But this certainly does not agree with the accounts given by ancient authors. For Josephus, quoting from the Tyrian Annals, cites a letter from King Hiram to Solomon, in which the former speaks of the Tyrians as inhabitants of an island, requesting Solomon to supply them with corn in return for the timber they were about to send him (τοῦ διὰ τὸ νῆσον οἰκεῖν δεόμεθα), which they needed as the inhabitants of an island. (JOSEPH. *Antiq. Jud.* lib. viii. c. 2. § 7. ed. cit. p. 340.) It is also stated by Josephus from Menander, who translated the Tyrian archives into Greek, that when Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, made his expedition into Syria and Phœnicia (ἀπέστη Τυρίων Σιδὼν καὶ Ἀκη (*al.* Ἀρκή) καὶ ἡ πάλαι Τύρος, καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλαι πόλεις), Sidon and Akka, and Old Tyre, and many other cities revolted from the Tyrians. (JOSEPH. *Antiq. Jud.* ix. 14. 2. ed. cit. p. 428.)

It is clear, therefore, from these and other testimonies that might be added, that Insular Tyre was an important place long before the times of Nebuchadnezzar.



The translation of the words of Isaiah therefore (Is. xxiii. 2, 6) in our authorized version, “ye inhabitants of the isle,” may well be allowed to stand, and not be altered, as Bishop Lowth suggests, to “ye inhabitants of the sea-coast,” for which there hardly seems sufficient authority. And such is the opinion given by Reland in his *Palæstina*, tom. 2. pp. 1050—1052.

It seems clear that Continental and Insular Tyre formed, so long as the former lasted, but one city, known generally under the name of Tyre, but occasionally distinguished from each other by circumstances which brought one part or the other into prominent notice. It is agreed by all, that Continental or Old Tyre was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and that whatever ruinous remains might be left, it never revived in that place. Insular Tyre also submitted at the same time to Nebuchadnezzar, and it appears from the Tyrian Annals, as given by Josephus (*Contra Apion*. lib. i. § 21. *Op. ed. cit.* pp. 1344—5), that the Tyrians some years afterwards received their kings from Babylon.

Continental Tyre was clearly, from the name given to it, older than Insular Tyre, and is noticed in the book of Joshua as “the strong city Tyre.” (*Josh.* xix. 29.) It is called ἡ πάλαι Τύρος, or, Παλαίτυρος, in Josephus, *loc. cit.*; Diodorus Siculus xvii. 40; xix. 59. *ed. cit.* tom. ii. pp. 190, 363; and Strabo, lib. xvi. *ed. cit.* p. 1099; *Vetus Tyrus*, by Q. Curtius, iv. 9; and Justin. xi. 10. Strabo, about three hundred years after its destruction by Alexander, describes its position as being on the coast, about thirty stadia south of the insular city. (*Strabo* *ibid.*)

On these and other points connected with the subject, see Vitringa, *Comment. in Isai.* vol. i. pp. 667—671; Relandi *Palæstina*, *Traj. Bat.* 1714. vol. ii. pp. 1046 et seq.; Robinson’s *Biblical Researches*. Lond. 1841. vol. iii. pp. 395 et seq.; Bishop Newton’s *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, *Diss.* xi.; Hales’s *New Analysis of Chronology*, &c. 2nd ed. vol. i. pp. 444—447.

NOTE C. TO SERMON V. (*Page 89.*)

See Prideaux's *Old and New Testament connected*, sub ann. B.C. 573. ed. cit. vol. i. p. 126.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON V. (*Page 89.*)

Dr. Prideaux has shown, that the chronology of the Phœnician Annals agrees exactly with the account given in the prophecy of Ezekiel as to the time of the capture of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, in the 32nd year of his reign. (*Old and New Test. connected*, ed. cit. vol. i. p. 127.) If the seventy years are to be calculated from this time, the period of the revival of the city will be a little more than thirty years after the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. From the words of the prophecy some commentators are inclined to think, that the seventy years mentioned are the period of the duration of the Babylonish Monarchy, terminating in the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, which is the common period mentioned by Jeremiah, xxv. 11, 12, for the subjection of all the countries subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, notwithstanding the different periods at which they were subdued, and that the period of subjection terminated at the same time with all, namely, the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy by Cyrus.

But, whichever interpretation is adopted, certain it is, that about seventy years after the 32nd of Nebuchadnezzar, we find the Phœnicians assisting Darius Hystaspes with their fleets, in his contest with the Ionians, (See *Herod. Hist. lib. v. Terpsich. cc. 108, 112,*) from which we may reasonably gather, that the Tyrians had by that time revived from their fallen state.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON V. (*Page 91.*)

Ὁ δὲ καὶ πληροῦται καθ' ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς· τῆς γὰρ ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἰδρυμένης ἐν τῇ Τυρίων πόλει, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς



ἔθνεσι, πολλὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ μισθωμάτων ἐκ πραγματείας κομιζομένων ἁγιάζεται τῷ Κυρίῳ, προσφερόμενα τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ αὐτοῦ· ἅπερ οἱ κομίζοντες προσφέρουσι σὺν εὐλαβείᾳ. EUSEBII CÆSAR. Comment. in Hesaiam, c. 23. v. 18. In Bern. Montfauconii Collectio Nova Patrum. Paris. 1706. vol. 2. p. 448. It is his comment on the words, “And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord.” In his “History of the Church,” book 10. c. 4, he gives a full account of the splendid church erected at Tyre by Paulinus after the cessation of the persecution by Diocletian.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON V. (*Page 91.*)

Cernamus in Tyro extructas Christi ecclesias; consideremus opes omnium, quod non reponantur nec thesaurizentur; sed dentur his qui habitant coram Domino. HIERON. Comment. in Is. lib. v. ad fin. Op. ed. Vallars. tom. iv. col. 233.

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NOTE G. TO SERMON V. (*Page 91.*)

See WILL. TYR. Hist. lib. xxiii. *ad fin.* ed. Paris. 1844. Recueil des Hist. des Croisades. i. 1135.

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NOTE H. TO SERMON V. (*Page 93.*)

See Prideaux's Old and New Test. connected, sub ann. B.C. 332 and 313. ed. cit. vol. ii. pp. 316—18 and 387. Bp. Newton's Dissert. on the Prophecies, dissert. xi. 6.

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NOTE I. TO SERMON V. (*Page 94.*)

Robinson's Biblical Researches. Lond. 1841. vol. iii. pp. 395, 6. See also pp. 406, 7.

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NOTE K. TO SERMON V. (*Page 95.*)

A full account of the siege and capture may be found in

Diodori Sic. Bibl. Hist. xvii. 40—46. tom. ii. 189—195. Quinti Curtii De rebus gestis Alex. M. iv. 7—19, and Arrian. De Exped. Alex. ii. 16—24. A notice of them occurs also in Josephus, Antiq. Jud. xi. 8. 3. and Justin. Hist. xi. 10.

I give the following words from the account by Quintus Curtius :—*Urbem obsidere statuit. Sed ante jacienda moles erat, quæ urbem continenti committeret. . . . Magna vis saxorum ad manum erat, Tyro vetere præbente.* Loc. cit. § 9. ed. Maittair. Lond. 1716. pp. 35, 36.

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NOTE L. TO SERMON V. (*Page 95.*)

Alexander, exceptis qui in templa confugerant, omnes interfici, ignemque tectis injici jubet. QUINT. CURT. De rebus gestis Alex. M. iv. 18. ed. Maittair. Lond. 1716. p. 42.

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NOTE M. TO SERMON V. (*Page 95.*)

Arrian. De Exped. Alex. lib. ii. c. 24. ed. Lug. Bat. 1704. p. 100.

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NOTE N. TO SERMON V. (*Page 96.*)

“Travellers of the 16th and 17th centuries describe it as only a heap of ruins—broken arches and vaults, tottering walls and fallen towers, with a few miserable inhabitants housing in the vaults amid the rubbish. Yet Fakhr ed-Din, the celebrated chief of the Druses, in the first half of the 17th century, made some attempts to restore its importance, and erected here a spacious palace and other buildings; but they were soon suffered to fall to decay. . . . The export of tobacco to Egypt has given it an impulse during the present century. . . . Yet the greater prosperity and importance of the trade of Beirût will probably prevent any further extensive enlargement.” Robinson’s Biblical Researches. Lond. 1841. vol. iii. pp. 406, 7.



NOTE O. TO SERMON V. (*Page 96.*)

Volney's Travels through Syria and Egypt. 2nd ed. Lond. 1788. vol. ii. p. 225.

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NOTE P. TO SERMON V. (*Page 100.*)

See EUSEB. Eccles. Hist. lib. viii. c. 7. and App. ad libr. viii. *intit.* De martyribus Palæstinæ, cc. 5 and 7. ed. cit. pp. 384, 5, and 416 and 418.

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## NOTES TO SERMON VI.

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NOTE A. TO SERMON VI. (*Page 103.*)

It is now generally agreed that the final capture and destruction of Nineveh occurred about B.C. 608 or 606. Clinton, our best modern chronologer, in his *Fasti Hellenici* (vol. i. p. 269) dates the destruction of Nineveh B.C. 606, agreeing in this with Eusebius, Blair, Jackson, Playfair, and Hales. (See Hales's *Chronol.* 2nd ed. i. 217.) Mr. Tyrwhitt, however, in an elaborate and able article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (vol. xviii. pt. 1. pp. 106 et seq.), has endeavoured to prove that the true date of this event is B.C. 608. In one of these years, then, the Medes and Babylonians captured and destroyed Nineveh, the king of the Medes at that time being Cyaxares, and the king of the Babylonians Nabopolassar. The general in command of the Medes is called by Eusebius (*Chron.* p. 46) Astyages, the eldest son of Cyaxares, and by Tobit (xiv. 15) Asuerus; but the general commanding the Babylonians was Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar. That Nineveh was de-

stroyed by the Medes and Babylonians near the close of the reign of Josiah, we have the testimony of Josephus, who tells us that “Necho king of Egypt raised an army, and marched to the river Euphrates, in order to fight with the Medes and Babylonians, who had overthrown the dominion of the Assyrians, for he had a desire to reign over Asia;” and Josiah, endeavouring to intercept Necho on his march, was killed. (Joseph. Antiq. x. 5.) The Scriptural account, however, is, that Necho went up “against the king of Assyria” (2 Kings xxiii. 28); and if so, Nineveh was not actually destroyed at that time. From these testimonies, therefore, we cannot infer more than that the destruction of Nineveh by the Medes and Babylonians was about the period of Josiah’s death.

The prophet Nahum uttered his prophecy according to Josephus (Antiq. ix. 11.) during the reign of Jotham, who died B.C. 742.

The prophecy of Zephaniah was delivered, as he himself states (Zeph. i. 1), in the days of king Josiah, and therefore not many years before the fall of Nineveh.

The prophecies of Isaiah are in the title of the book, given it at least at a period when their age must have been well known, said to have been uttered “in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah” (Is. i. 1), and therefore many years before the fall of Nineveh.

NOTE B. TO ERMON VI. (*Page* 103.)

Jonah is said by Josephus (Antiq. ix. c. 10.) to have prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II., which lasted from B.C. 824 to B.C. 783. His prophecy is generally considered as of about the date B.C. 800; and was delivered apparently when either Pul, or the father of Pul, reigned at Nineveh. The account given by Diodorus Siculus is in his History, bk. 2, near the beginning, (lib. ii. § 3. ed. Wesseling. vol. i. p. 115) and refers to the city as originally built by Ninus. It may be observed, that the shape and size of the city as



here described—namely, an oblong whose sides measured 150 furlongs, and the ends 90 furlongs—correspond pretty well with the site as marked out by Mr. Layard in his “Nineveh and its Remains.” It is stated also in Mr. Layard’s remarks on Col. Rawlinson’s “Outlines of Assyrian History,” appended to the “Twenty-ninth Report” of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1852 (p. xliii.), that he is “convinced, that whatever may have been the original names of the various royal quarters or enclosures represented by Nimrud, Koyunjik, Khursabad, &c., they were all known at one period by the name of Nineveh, and formed the great city described by the sacred writings, and the Greek historians and geographers;” and that “Col. Rawlinson himself stated as much in his paper read before the Society on his return to England two years ago;” and that “Captain Jones, in a recent letter, states that he had established, by trigonometrical survey, the fact previously conjectured by Mr. Layard, that the same great ruin of Nimrud, Karamless, Khursabad, and Koyunjik stood at the four angles of a perfect parallelogram.” And when we read that the founder of the city not only gave liberty to people of any other nation, in any number, to dwell there, but allowed the citizens a large territory next adjoining to them (Diod. Sic. *ibid.*), and know that it was common in the great Eastern cities to include a large portion of land for the pasture of cattle, we need not be surprised at its extent. At that early period a high wall was alone almost sufficient for defence, and did not need to be manned as was afterwards required when implements for carrying on a siege had been invented. Strabo, a high authority, says that it was much larger (*πολυ μείζων*) than Babylon (Lib. 16. p. 1071. ed. Amstel. 1707), and he makes the compass of Babylon 385 stadia (*ib.* p. 1072). It appears to have been, in fact, a *walled district*, as it is clear that Babylon was. And from the accounts recent travellers have given us of the capital city of Japan, there seems to be a city now in that part of the world of a very similar kind. The statement of Diodorus, that it was built near

the river Euphrates, is easily explained by the fact mentioned by Mr. Jones (Topogr. of Nineveh, Journal of Royal As. Soc. vol. xv. pt. 2. p. 331) that "even at the present day the Tigris is confounded with the Euphrates by half the population of the district."

Mr. Rawlinson (brother of Col. Rawlinson) in his "Five Great Monarchies of the ancient Eastern World," just published, has, I see, advocated the opinion that Nineveh must have been confined to the site of the two mounds now called Nebbi Yunus and Koyunjik opposite Mosul. (vol. i. pp. 310—321.) But his own testimony on one point seems to me sufficient to make this improbable. He admits that the testimony of Jonah, an eye witness, is, that in Nineveh "were more than 120,000 persons who could not discern between their right hand and their left" (p. 314), and that, according to his *own* supposition as to the extent of Nineveh, "the population of ancient Nineveh, within the enceinte here described, may be estimated at 175,000 souls." (p. 321.) Now whether we suppose the persons described by Jonah to have been only infants, or the uneducated portion of the population, the *whole* population must have been very much larger than 175,000, according to this description of Jonah. And further, the size of Nineveh must have been very much less than all ancient accounts represent it to be, and could not have included the pasture land which in those times was included in such cities in proportion to the number of its inhabitants.

To me it seems most probable that the original Nineveh was not of such large dimensions, and perhaps consisted only of what is now called Nimrud, or perhaps Koyunjik, but was afterwards enlarged by the monarchs who so largely extended the limits of the Assyrian Empire and increased its wealth and glory by their conquests. And the extent and magnificence ascribed to the city by Ctesias and others, may be applicable only to the city as so enlarged. That the four sites of Koyunjik, Karamless, Nimrud, and Khorsabad have the appearance of having been fortified on what would



have been the inside of the city if they had all been included within it (as Mr. Rawlinson objects, p. 313) does not seem to me to afford any argument against such a supposition, nor that the shape of the city would have been "a rhombus very much slanted from the perpendicular," instead of a rectangular parallelogram. The words of the prophet Nahum (iii. 12) "all thy strong holds," would seem to imply that there were separate *strong holds* inside the city. To suppose that the city was only of the extent assigned to it by Mr. Rawlinson, we must give up all the ancient accounts of it as altogether erroneous; and Mr. Layard and Mr. Rawlinson himself admit, that even the present remains of the walls seem to indicate, that the account given of their breadth and height by Diodorus Siculus is quite correct. (See Rawl. p. 321.)

Mr. Jones's view is, that "the capital derived its name from, or *vice versâ* gave its name to, *the district* where the founder first determined on fixing his abode," and "the phrase, 'a great city,' might with every propriety be collectively or individually applied to either one or all of the Nineveh edifices." (Journal of Royal As. Soc. vol. xv. pt. 2. p. 315.) And differing from Mr. Layard in his supposition that Nimrud "represents the original site" of the city Nineveh, he says that Nimrud "was endowed with the name as a part of the district of Nineveh, or as the capital of a subsequent date, we will not deny, but that it was 'par excellence' the capital of Assyria from the earliest times we cannot subscribe to." (Ibid. p. 330.)

And it seems, from Mr. Jones's survey, that there are no traces to indicate the existence of a wall enclosing all the four sites of Nimrud, Koyunjik, Karamless and Khorsabad.

It is impossible, therefore, altogether to clear away the difficulties that exist to a determination of the precise extent or site of the city.

NOTE C. TO SERMON VI. (*Page 105.*)

The only account which we have of the siege and capture of Nineveh is that which is given in the second book of the History of Diodorus Siculus, apparently from the History of Ctesias. But the account as there given is made to refer to a period long antecedent to that in which Nineveh was finally captured and destroyed, though the narrative states that it was then razed to the ground, which leads to the supposition that there was some confusion in the mind of the writer between the period at which the Medes first revolted from the Assyrian rule and that at which, in conjunction with the Babylonians, they captured and destroyed Nineveh. The statement of Ctesias, as given by Diodorus Siculus, is, that the city was captured and destroyed by Arbaces, a Median general, and Belesis, the governor of Babylon, when both the Medes and Babylonians were subject to the king of Nineveh, and that this took place more than two hundred years before the time of Astyages the son of Cyaxares. (See Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. ii. §§ 24—28 and §§ 32—34. ed. Wesseling. tom. i. pp. 137—141, and pp. 145—148.) But according to Herodotus and other authorities far more credible than Ctesias, it was Cyaxares, the father of Astyages, who captured and destroyed Nineveh in conjunction with Nabopolassar governor of Babylon, or rather his son Nebuchadnezzar.

That Ctesias, though he has probably given a correct account of the siege and capture of the city, has not given correctly the time at which it took place, is evident from his own account. For, first, he calls the Sardanapalus that destroyed himself at this time “the last king of the Assyrians,” (ἔσχατος γινόμενος Ἀσσυρίων βασιλεὺς. lib. ii. § 23. Op. ed. Wesseling. vol. i. p. 136,) and the last was certainly the one whose reign was terminated by the capture of Nineveh by Cyaxares about B.C. 608 or 606. But there is very sufficient testimony that there were two kings of Assyria bearing the name of Sardanapalus, one warlike and vigorous, the other weak and effeminate. Σαρδαναπάλους ἐν β’.



Περσικῶν δύο φησὶ γεγονέναι Καλλισθένης· ἓνα μὲν, δραστήριον καὶ γενναῖον· ἄλλον δὲ μαλακόν. SUIDAS in verb. *Lexicon*, ed. Cant. 1705. vol. 3. p. 287. Ὁ δὲ Ἑλλάνικος, ἐν τοῖς Περσικοῖς, δύο φησὶ Σαρδαναπάλους γεγονέναι. SCHOL. in Aristoph. *Aves*. v. 1022. Aristoph. *Op.* ed. Kuster. Amstel. 1710. p. 416. Γεγόνασι δὲ δύο Σαρδαναπάλοι. HESYCH. in nom. *Lex.* ed. Albert. Lug. Bat. 1746—66. vol. 2. 1153.

Suidas adds (*loc. cit.*), that the inscription on the monument of the effeminate Sardanapalus states, that he was ὁ Ἀνακυνδαράξου παῖς, and that he perished in the flames that consumed his palace.

The weak Sardanapalus, therefore, described by Ctesias is the second Assyrian monarch of that name, and Ctesias probably has by mistake assigned his era to that of the first Sardanapalus.

Secondly, he tells us that some of the spoils of Nineveh were taken to Ecbatana (*ibid.* § 28. p. 142), which, according to the trustworthy account of Herodotus (*Clio*, or lib. 1. c. 98), was not built till the times of Deioces the grandfather of Cyaxares, who, according to him, was the first king of the Medes.

Thirdly, and more especially, he makes the Assyrian empire reach its full extent, and come to its termination, at a period previous to the reigns of some of its greatest Emperors, who extended its boundaries much beyond what they were at the period of which he speaks. Pul, Tiglath-Pileser, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, to mention no others, all came after the period at which he fixes the final capture and destruction of Nineveh.

On these grounds it is clear, that Ctesias has altogether mistaken the *time* at which the final capture of Nineveh took place. And he bears no very high character for accuracy. For Aristotle, Plutarch, and Aulus Gellius, all speak of him as not trustworthy. Joseph Scaliger also denounces him as worthless as a historical authority.

The error has probably arisen from confounding the first defection of the Medes from the Assyrian Empire with their

ultimate triumph over it in the final capture and destruction of Nineveh.

Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* x. 2), that the dominion of the Assyrians was overthrown by the Medes about the period of Sennacherib's death. This no doubt alludes to the first defection of the Medes from the king of Assyria, which probably took place soon after the return of Sennacherib to Nineveh after the destruction of his army before Jerusalem. That there was a partial destruction of the city long before its final capture and destruction, seems probable from an inspection of its ruins at the present day. (See Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. ii. p. 162, and 216, 217. See, also, pp. 221—228, and 232, 233.)

At the same time, the account given in Diodorus of what took place at the final capture and destruction of the city, is not rendered untrustworthy by an error as to the precise time of its occurrence.

It is right, however, that the reader should understand, when we quote the account given in Diodorus Siculus of the capture of Nineveh, as showing that the prophecy of Nahum was accomplished even in the details of the siege and capture, that the statement of Diodorus must be taken as needing some correction as to the time spoken of in it to make it applicable for this purpose.

NOTE D. TO SERMON VI. (*Page* 105.)

Διόπερ τῆς δυνάμεως ἀπάσης ἐσθιωμένης, οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀρβάκην παρὰ τινων αὐτομόλων πυθόμενοι τὴν ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ τῶν πολεμίων ῥαθυμίαν καὶ μέθην, νυκτὸς ἀπροσδοκῆτως τὴν ἐπίθεσιν ἐποίησαντο· προσπεσόντες δὲ συντεταγμένοι μὲν ἀσυντάκτοις, ἔτοιμοι δὲ ἀπαρασκεύοις, τῆς τε παρεμβολῆς ἐκράτησαν, καὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν πολλοὺς ἀνελόντες, τοὺς ἄλλους μέχρι τῆς πόλεως κατεδίωξαν. DIODOR. SIC. Bibl. lib. ii. § 26. ed. Wesseling. vol. i. pp. 139, 140.



NOTE E. TO SERMON VI. (*Page 106.*)

Τῷ τρίτῳ δ' ἔτει, συνεχῶς ὄμβρων ῥαγδαίων καταρῥαγόντων, συνέβη τὸν Εὐφράτην μέγαν γενόμενον κατακλύσαι τὸ μέρος τῆς πόλεως, καὶ καταβαλεῖν τὸ τεῖχος ἐπὶ σταδίου εἴκοσιν. ἔνταῦθα ὁ βασιλεὺς νομίσας τετελέσθαι τὸν χρησμὸν, καὶ τῇ πόλει τὸν ποταμὸν γεγονέναι φανερώς πολέμιον, ἀπέγνω τὴν σωτηρίαν. ἵνα δὲ μὴ τοῖς πολεμίοις γένηται ὑποχείριος πυρὰν ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις κατεσκεύασεν ὑπερμεγέθη, καὶ τὸν τε χρυσὸν καὶ τὸν ἄργυρον ἅπαντα . . . . ἐσώρευσεν . . . . ἅμα τούτοις ἅπασιν ἑαυτὸν τε καὶ τὰ βασίλεια κατέκαυσεν. Οἱ δ' ἀποστάται, πυθόμενοι τὴν ἀπώλειαν Σαρδαναπάλου, τῆς μὲν πόλεως ἐκράτησαν, εἰσπεσόντες κατὰ τὸ πεπτωκὸς μέρος τοῦ τεύχους, τὸν δ' Αῤῥάκην κ. τ. λ. DIODOR. SIC. Bibl. lib. ii. § 27. ed. Wesseling. vol. i. pp. 140, 141.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON VI. (*Page 109.*)

Ἡ Νῖνος μὲν ἀπόλωλεν ἤδη, καὶ οὐδὲν ἵχνος ἔτι λοιπὸν αὐτῆς· οὐδ' ἂν εἶπης ὅπου πότε ἦν. ἡ Βαβυλὼν δέ σοι ἐκείνη ἐστίν, ἡ εὐπυργος, ἡ τὴν μέγαν περίβολον, οὐ μετὰ πολὺ καὶ αὐτὴ ζητηθησομένη, ὥσπερ ἡ Νῖνος. LUCIANI SAMOS. Χάρων ἢ Ἐπισκοποῦντες. Op. ed. Hemsterhus. et Reitz. Amstel. 1743. tom. i. pp. 521, 522.

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NOTE G. TO SERMON VI. (*Page 109.*)

See Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. i. pp. 149 and 350 ; vol. ii. pp. 121 ; 138, 9 ; 141 ; 160 ; 162 ; 216—218. Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies*, vol. i. *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* in various parts.

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## NOTES TO SERMON VII.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON VII. (*Page 120.*)

“The desolation [*i.e.* of Ephesus] is complete, and the temple of Diana or the church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveller.” Gibbon’s History, &c., ch. 64. vol. xi. p. 427. ed. 1817.

An interesting account of the condition of the Seven Churches of Asia in 1846, by Captain Newbold, F.R.S., &c., from personal inspection, is to be found in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1851, vol. xiii. pp. 81—89, from which, as one of the most recent, it may be worth while to give some extracts, particularly as it may not have a very wide circulation through the “Journal.” It would be easy to confirm his statements from the accounts given by other travellers; but as there is no discrepancy in the accounts, it is unnecessary to give more than a general reference to them. Of Ephesus he says,—“Ephesus, the Great, the Ornament of Asia, is deserted. The hungry jackal prowls in the grass-covered theatre which echoed back the shouts of the tumultuous citizens, crying, ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians;’ the owl screeches from its lonely walls; a pestiferous marsh exhaling malaria and death chokes up its port; while vast disjointed masses of brick and mortar, scattered on the hill of Ayasalúk, alone serve to indicate the site of the church of St. John, re-erected by Justinian, and where the converts of St. Paul worshipped the only true and living God. . . . Ayasalúk, the modern village, stands more than a mile from the ruins, and contains only one Christian hut—that of a Greek Caféji; about forty Turkish cottages are scattered over the hill.” (pp. 81, 82.)



NOTE B. TO SERMON VII. (*Page 121.*)

Καταπληῆξαι γὰρ φασὶ τοὺς ἐν κύκλῳ περιεστῶτας· θεωμένους, τοτὲ μὲν μάστιξι μέχρι καὶ τῶν ἐνδοτάτῳ φλεβῶν καὶ ἀρτηριῶν καταξαινομένους· ὥς ἤδη καὶ τὰ ἐν μυχοῖς ἀπόρρητα τοῦ σώματος σπλάγχνα τε αὐτῶν καὶ μέλη κατοπτεύεσθαι· τοτὲ δὲ τοὺς ἀπὸ θαλάττης κήρυκας, καὶ τινὰς ὀξεῖς ὀβελίσκους ὑποστρωννυμένους, καὶ διὰ παντὸς εἶδους κολάσεων καὶ βασάνων προϊόντας· καὶ τέλος θηρσὶν εἰς βορὰν παραδιδόμενους. EUSEB. Eccles. Hist. iv. 15. ed. Reading. Cant. 1720. pp. 163, 164.

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NOTE C. TO SERMON VII. (*Page 121.*)

“The town [Smyrna] is still rapidly enlarging to the south and south-east, on the edge of the bay to Windmill Point. The Greeks, who in 1824 had only three churches, have now five; the Latins have three, in 1824 two; and the Protestants two, as formerly. . . . The Greeks possess numerous schools. . . . The Greek church of Smyrna is presided over by a Bishop, under the Patriarch, who resides at Constantinople, and continues in a flourishing state.” (Captain Newbold’s acct. of the Seven Churches, *loc. cit.* p. 83.)

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NOTE D. TO SERMON VII. (*Page 122.*)

Ἐξῆς δὲ καὶ ἄλλων ἐν Περγάμῳ πόλει τῆς Ἀσίας ὑπομνήματα μεμαρτυρηκότων φέρεται, Κάρπου καὶ Παπύλου, καὶ γυναικὸς Ἀγαθονίκης, μετὰ πλείστας καὶ διαπρεπεῖς ὁμολογίας ἐπιδόξως τετελειωμένων. EUSEB. Eccles. Hist. iv. 15. *fin.* ed. cit. p. 173.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON VII. (*Page 123.*)

“Pergamos is in a more flourishing state than all the other churches, except Smyrna. . . . The Christian quarter occupies the slope of the hill of the Acropolis, on the left bank of the river, and contains two Greek and one Armenian

churches. The modern Greek church is a showy gilded edifice; the ancient one, supposed to be that of the Apocalypse, is small, dark, and sombre." (Capt. Newbold's account, *loc. cit.* 83, 84.)

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NOTE F. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 124.)

"Thyatira, the fourth church of the Apocalypse, had entirely disappeared, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, until again brought to light under the Turkish name of Aksá, or Ak Hissar, towards the close of the seventeenth century. . . It is still a flourishing town, containing about 2000 Greeks, 120 Armenians, and 8000 Turks. . . The Greeks and Armenians have each a church here. That of the Greeks is said to be the most ancient, and, the priest informed me, is built on the foundations, still visible, of the church of the Apocalypse." (Capt. Newbold's account, *loc. cit.* p. 85.)

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NOTE G. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 124.)

Μελίτωνα τὸν εὐνοῦχον, τὸν ἐν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι πάντα πολιτευσάμενον, ὃς κεῖται ἐν Σάρδεσι κ. τ. λ. EUSEB. Eccles. Hist. v. 24. ed. cit. p. 244.

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NOTE H. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 125.)

"Sardis, lady of kingdoms, vying with Memphis in antiquity, once the proud capital of Croesus, . . . is now more forlorn than even Ephesus. A Turkish cafinet, mill, and shop of a poor Greek vendor of provisions and spirits, linger on its deserted site; while a few black tents of the wandering Yerooks speckle the neighbouring hills and the borders of the famous Pactolus. The thousand mounds, among which the tumulus of Alyattes rises conspicuous, the Necropolis of the Lydian kings, and the melancholy shores of the Gygaean Lake, the intervening flat swampy plain of the Hermus,



seen from the heights of Mount Imolus, on whose declivities the ruins of Sardis are scattered, by no means diminish the solemn air of sadness which prevails around. . . . . Two massive buildings, near the mill at the bottom of the hill, are said to have formerly been churches. The highest on the acclivity is supposed to have been the church of the Apocalypse. It is now roofless, and four only of the buttresses which originally strengthened the wall, and from which sprang the massive brick arches of the roof, are left standing.” (Capt. Newbold’s account, *loc. cit.* p. 87.)

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NOTE I. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 126.)

Gibbon, *loc. cit.* ch. lxiv. vol. xi. p. 428.

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NOTE K. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 127.)

“By the Turks, Philadelphia is now called *Allah Shahr*, *God’s city*.” (Capt. Newbold’s account, *loc. cit.* p. 89.)

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NOTE L. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 127.)

“It is indeed an interesting circumstance to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish Empire. There is still a numerous Christian population, occupying three hundred houses. Divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches; and there are twenty of a smaller description, in which, once a year, the Liturgy is read. . . . . Many of his [*i.e.* the bishop’s] remarks afforded us satisfaction. The Bible he declared to be the only foundation of all religious belief, and I was astonished to hear him say that he knew of no other confession of Christian faith than the Creeds of the Apostles, of Nice, and of St. Athananius, . . . he used these decisive words, ‘Abuses have entered into the Church, which former ages might endure, but the present must put them down.’ . . . . . The Christian

population he considered to be on the increase at Philadelphia.” Hartley’s visit to the Apoc. Churches in 1826, in his “Researches in Greece and the Levant.” 2nd ed. 1833. pp. 288—291.

Captain Newbold gives the following account of it:—  
 “Philadelphia, the sixth of the churches, now ranks after Smyrna and Pergamus in point of population, which amounts to 10,000 Turks and 3000 Greeks. It boasts of 25 churches, in 20 of which, however, service is performed only once a year. They are all small and mean, and contained many fragments of columns and ancient sculpture. A massive ruined pile, which had once an arched brick roof, like the structures at Sardis, was pointed out to me as the church of the Apocalypse....Its present comparative flourishing state, however, bears forcibly on the message of grace addressed to it by St. John: ‘I know thy works,’ &c. (Rev. iii. 8.) Philadelphia is the residence of a Greek bishop, who adds to this title those of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossæ.”  
 (Capt. Newbold’s account, *loc. cit.* pp. 88, 89.)

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NOTE M. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 129.)

Gibbon, *loc. cit.* ch. lxiv. vol. xi. p. 427. ed. 1817.

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NOTE N. TO SERMON VII. (*Page* 129.)

Smith’s “Survey of the Seven Churches of Asia,” in his “Remarks on the Manners &c. of the Turks,” p. 251. The account given by Captain Newbold of its state in 1846 is, “Laodicea, the seventh and last of the churches, the very site of which had been forgotten for centuries, was brought to light again, under its present name, Eski Hissar, by Mr. Smith and Sir Paul Rycaut, towards the close of the seventeenth century. *It was then, and is now, a melancholy mass of deserted ruins....*The ruins of an ancient church still exist.”  
 (Capt. Newbold, *loc. cit.* p. 89.)



*NOTES TO SERMON VIII.*

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NOTE A. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 139.*)

THAT Babylon was an accredited name for Rome, both among the Jews and Christians, in the early period of the Christian era, and was so used by the Apostles Peter and John, rests upon numerous testimonies. And the use of this name for Rome may be easily accounted for. Rome was in many respects the successor of Babylon. It was the chief city of the empire that succeeded that of which Babylon had been the capital. It stood in the same relation to the Jews, after the destruction of the second Temple, as Babylon had done. And the use of this name for Rome enabled the Apostles and early Christians to speak more freely of the end that awaited it. To foretell the destruction of Rome under its ordinary name, would have been suicidal to them.

Some testimonies that the ancient Jews called Rome Babylon may be found in Schoettgen.\* The reason for its being so called probably was, as Schoettgen observes (*Hor. Hebr.* vol. 1. p. 1050), that Rome performed the same part towards the Jews under the second Temple as Babylon did to them under the first.

So Augustine says that Babylon was as it were the first Rome, and Rome as it were the second Babylon.†

Jerome testifies, that some of the early Christian expo-

\* Schoettgen. *Horæ Hebr.* vol. 1. p. 1125. A Rabbinical fable in one of them relates that water was brought from the Euphrates to mix with the clay for the first buildings at Rome.

† *Babylonia quasi prima Roma . . . Roma quasi secunda Babylonia.* AUGUST. *De Civ. Dei.* xviii. 2. Op. ed. Ben. vii. 370.

sitors maintained, that the Old Testament prophecies referring to Babylon would have a further fulfilment in Rome, and presignified the fate that awaited it.\*

And when speaking of the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the Fathers from the earliest period with one voice unhesitatingly assert it to be Rome.

Thus in two places Tertullian says,—“Babylon, in our John, is a figure of the city of Rome.”†

So Victorinus, Bishop of Petau, towards the close of the third century, interprets the ruin of Babylon as the ruin of Rome,‡ and the woman sitting on the seven mountains (Rev. xvii. 9), as meaning “the city of Rome,”§ and the kings in ver. 10 are the Roman Emperors; and he holds that the prophecies of Isaiah relating to Babylon, refer to the same Babylon as that spoken of in the Apocalypse, the name being so applied as meaning the city of confusion.||

So also Jerome, commenting on Is. xlvii. 1 et seq., says, that “the city of Rome,” “in the Apocalypse of John and the Epistle of Peter, is specially called Babylon.”¶

\* Ex eo quod juxta LXX scriptum est, filia Babylonis, non ipsam Babylonem quidam, sed Romanam urbem interpretentur, quæ in Apocalypsi Joannis, et in Epistola Petri, Babylon specialiter appellatur, et cuncta quæ nunc ad Babylonem dicuntur, illius ruinæ convenire testentur, contra quem vocanda sit avis, Deique justitia: ut postquam Sion, id est, Ecclesia salvata fuerit, illa pereat in æternum. HIERON. Comment. in Is. c. 47. Op. ed. Vallars. iv. 549.

† Sic et Babylon, apud Joannem nostrum, Romanæ urbis figura est, proinde et magnæ, et regno superbæ, et sanctorum debellatricis. TERTULL. Adv. Jud. c. 9. Op. Par. 1664. p. 193. Repeated in the same words, Adv. Marc. iii. 13. ib. pp. 404, 405.

‡ Ruina magna Babylonis, id est civitatis Romanæ. VICTORIN. PETAVION. Scholia in Apoc. vii. 2. Galland. Bibl. Patr. tom. iv., or Migne Bibl. Patr. tom. v. col. 331.

§ Id. ibid. col. 338.

|| Id. ibid. col. 341.

¶ Romanam urbem . . . . quæ in Apocalypsi Joannis et in Epistola Petri Babylon specialiter appellatur. HIERON. Comment. in Is. c. 47. *loc. supra cit.*



And in the letter of Paula and Eustochium to Marcella, urging her to quit Rome and join them at Bethlehem, occurring in the works of Jerome, she is thus exhorted:—"Read the Apocalypse of John, and see what is said of the woman clothed in purple, and blasphemy written on her forehead, the seven hills, the many waters, and the end of Babylon. 'Go out of her, my people, saith the Lord, &c.' [Rev. xviii. 4.] Reverting also to Jeremiah, consider what is written, 'Fly out of the midst of Babylon, &c.' [Jerem. li. 8.]"\*

The identity of Rome with the Babylon of St. John is here taken for granted.

Primasius, in his Commentary on the Revelations, seems also to take the same view.†

And Andrew of Cæsarea, in his Commentary on the Revelations, though he does not himself hold the view, admits that "the ancient doctors of the Church" understood Babylon in the Revelations to mean Rome.‡

St. Peter also apparently uses the name Babylon for Rome, when he says, at the end of his first Epistle, "The Church that is at Babylon elected together with you saluteth you." (1 Pet. v. 13.) For—

1. This is the unopposed testimony of several of the Fathers.

\* Et hic puto locus sanctior est rupe Tarpeia, quæ de cœlo sæpius fulminata ostendit, quod Domino displiceret. Lege Apocalypsin Joannis, et quid de muliere purpurata, et scripta in ejus fronte blasphemia, septem montibus, aquis multis, et Babylonis cantetur exitu, contuere. Exite inquit Dominus de illa populus meus, &c. Ad Jeremiam quoque regrediens, scriptum pariter attende, Fugite de medio Babylonis, &c. Paul. et Eustoch. Ep. ad Marcell. ap. Hieron. Ep. 46. § 10, 11. Op. i. 207, 208.

† PRIMAS. In Apoc. xvii. 9. Bibl. Patrum. Lat. ed. Migne. tom. 68. col. 899.

‡ Ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διδασκάλων κατὰ τῆς παρὰ Ρωμαίοις Βαβυλῶνος ταῦτα φάναι προφητεύεσθαι. ANDREÆ CÆSAR. Comment. in Apoc. [xviii. 21—24] c. 55. Vide Chrysostomi Opera, ed. F. Ducæo. Paris. 1636. tom. ii. Append. p. 108.

Thus, Eusebius tells us, that it was said that Peter wrote his first Epistle from Rome, and that he signified this by calling the city figuratively Babylon, in the words, “The Church that is at Babylon elected together with you saluteth you.” His words leave it somewhat doubtful to whom he refers as bearing this testimony; but the names of Clement of Alexandria and Papias bishop of Hierapolis occur in the previous context in a way which has led some to suppose that his reference is to them.\*

St. Jerome also twice asserts that St. Peter meant Rome when he spoke of Babylon in his first Epistle.†

In like manner Œcumenius says, without hesitation, that by Babylon St. Peter means Rome.‡

2. Several MSS. add at the end of the first epistle of St. Peter, that “it was written from Rome.”§

\* His words are these. After mentioning that Mark’s Gospel was written at the request of Peter’s hearers at Rome, and was sanctioned by Peter, he says,—Κλήμης ἐν ἑκτῷ τῶν ὑποτυπώσεων παρατέθεται τὴν ἱστορίαν· συνεπιμαρτυρεῖ δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ ὁ Ἱεραπολίτης ἐπίσκοπος ὀνόματι Παπίας. Then follow these words,—Τοῦ δὲ Μάρκου μνημονεύειν τὸν Πέτρον ἐν τῇ προτέρᾳ ἐπιστολῇ, ἣν καὶ συντάξαι φασὶν ἐπ’ αὐτῆς Ῥώμης· σημαίνειν τε τοῦτ’ αὐτὸν τὴν πόλιν τροπικώτερον Βαβυλῶνα προσειπόντα διὰ τούτων· ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτὴ, κ. τ. λ. EUSEB. PAMPH. Eccl. Hist. ii. 15. ed. Reading. Cant. 1720. i. 64. It will be observed, that the construction of the second sentence leaves it *doubtful* whether the reference is to the authors mentioned in the preceding.

† Meminit hujus Marci et Petrus in Epistola prima, sub nomine Babylonis figuraliter Romam significans: “Salutat vos quæ in Babylone, &c.” HIERON. De vir. illustr. c. 8. Op. ed. Vallars. ii. 843. Romanam urbem . . . quæ in Apocalypsi Joannis et in Epistola Petri Babylon specialiter appellatur. ID. Comment. in Is. c. 47. Op. iv. 549.

‡ Βαβυλῶνα δὲ τὴν Ῥώμην διὰ τὸ περιφανὲς καλεῖ, ὃ καὶ ἡ Βαβυλὼν πολλῷ χρόνῳ ἔσχηκε. ŒCUM. Comm. in loc. Lutet. 1631. vol. 2. p. 526.

§ Ἐγράφη ἀπὸ Ῥώμης. Twelve MSS. are enumerated by Scholz in his edition of the New Test. in 1836, as having this notice at the end of the Epistle.



And one MS. is mentioned by Griesbach and Scholz which has "Rome" in the margin opposite "Babylon."

3. There is nothing to lead us to suppose, that St. Peter was ever at Babylon in Assyria, still less at Babylon in Egypt.

Now, it is difficult to understand that there should be this general agreement among the early Fathers that the Apostles thus used the name Babylon for Rome, unless there was good ground for the statement.

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NOTE B. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 141.*)

"Tantum qui nunc tenet, teneat; donec de medio fiat." Quis nisi Romanus status? Cujus abscessio in decem reges dispersa Antichristum superducet, et tunc revelabitur iniquus. TERTULL. De res. carn. c. 24. Op. Paris. 1664. p. 340.

Post defectum regni Romani appariturum Antichristum dicit [*i.e.* Apostolus]. PSEUDO-AMBROS. Comment. in 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9. Op. ed. Ben. tom. ii. Pt. 2. col. 286.

See also HIERON., CHRYSOSTOM., &c., Comment. *in loc.*

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NOTE C. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 142.*)

Potuiſſes autem prærogativam ſacerdotii ex eo potius intelligere, quod dictum eſt, non a quolibet, ſed a Deo, non regi ſed ſacerdoti, non de regia ſtirpe ſed de ſacerdotali proſapia deſcendenti, de ſacerdotibus videlicet qui erant in Anathot;—'Ecce conſtitui te ſuper gentes, et regna, ut evellas, et diſſipes; ædifices et plantes, &c.' Præterea noſſe debueraſ, quod 'Fecit Deus duo magna luminaria in firmamento cœli: luminare majus, ut præeſſet diei: et luminare minus, ut præeſſet nocti:' utrumque magnum, ſed alterum majus. Ad firmamentum igitur cœli, hoc eſt, Univerſalis Eccleſiæ, fecit Deus duo magna luminaria, id eſt, duas inſtituit dignitates, quæ ſunt, Pontificalis auctoritas et

Regalis potestas. Sed illa, quæ præest diebus, id est, spiritualibus, major est; quæ vero carnalibus, minor: ut quanta est inter Solem et Lunam, tanta inter Pontifices et Reges differentia cognoscatur. Decretal. Gregor. lib. 1. Tit. 33. De major. et obed. c. 6. Corp. Jur. Canon. Lugd. 1624. tom. ii. Decretal. col. 426. (In some copies of this edition the words *major* and *minor*, in the latter part of this passage, are transposed, evidently by a misprint, against the whole bearing and context of the passage.)

The Gloss on this passage has also the following words,—*Igitur cum terra sit septies major luna, sol autem octies major terra; restat ergo, ut Pontificalis dignitas quadragesies septies sit major Regali dignitate. Ibid.*

*Igitur Ecclesiæ unius et unicæ unum corpus, unum caput, non duo capita, quasi monstrum, Christus videlicet, et Christi vicarius Petrus, Petrique successor... In hac ejusque potestate duos esse gladios, spirituales videlicet et temporales, Evangelicis dictis instruimur... Uterque ergo est in potestate Ecclesiæ, spiritualis scilicet gladius et materialis. Sed is quidem pro Ecclesia, ille vero ab Ecclesia exercendus. Ille sacerdotis, is manu regum et militum, sed ad nutum et patientiam sacerdotis. Oportet autem gladium esse sub gladio, et temporalem auctoritatem spirituali subjici potestati. ...Nam, veritate testante, spiritualis potestas terrenam potestatem instituere habet, et judicare, si bona non fuerit: sic de Ecclesia et Ecclesiastica potestate verificatur vaticinium Hieremiæ, ‘Ecce constitui te hodie super gentes et regna’ et cætera quæ sequuntur. Ergo si deviat terrena potestas, judicabitur a potestate spirituali, sed si deviat spiritualis minor, a suo superiori: si vero suprema, a solo Deo, non ab homine poterit judicari: testante Apostolo, ‘Spiritualis homo judicat omnia, ipse autem a nemine judicatur.’ Est autem hæc auctoritas (etsi data sit homini, et exerceatur per hominem) non humana, sed potius divina, ore divino Petro data, sibique suisque successoribus in ipso quem confessus fuit, petra firmata: dicente Domino ipsi Petro, ‘Quodcumque*



ligaveris, &c.' Quicumque igitur huic potestati a Deo sic ordinatæ resistit, Dei ordinationi resistit..... Porro subesse Romano Pontifici, omni humanæ creaturæ declaramus, dicimus, diffinimus, et pronunciamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis. Extrav. Commun. lib. 1. tit. De major. et obed. c. 1. Corp. Jur. Canon. Lugd. 1624. tom. iii. Extrav. Comm. col. 206—212.

Cum enim Dominus Papa sit judex ordinarius omnium hominum ... potest quilibet eum adire per simplicem querelam re integra. Gloss. in Decretal. Gregor. lib. ii. tit. 28. De appellat. c. 59. verb. *si dicat*. Corp. Jur. Canon. Lugd. 1624. tom. ii. Decretal. col. 962.

On his election also, when the triple crown is placed on his head, he is told “never to forget,” that he is “the father of princes and kings, and the supreme judge of the Universe, and on earth the vicar of Jesus Christ our Saviour.” (See Ceremoniale Rom.)

Innumerable other passages to the same effect, both from the Canon Law (as for instance Grat. Decret. P. ii. caus. 15. q. 7. c. 3.), the authorized Gloss upon it, the Papal Bulls (as for instance that against Q. Elizabeth), and the writings of Rome’s most eminent Cardinals and divines, might easily be given. But it seems useless to heap up other testimonies in addition to such as the above.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 142.*)

Ναὸν δὲ Θεοῦ τὰς ἐκκλησίας ἐκάλεσεν, ἐν αἷς ἀρπάσει τὴν προεδρείαν, θεὸν ἑαυτὸν ἀποδεικνῦναι πειρώμενος. THEODORET. Comment. in 2 Thess. ii. 4. Op. ed. Noesselt. Halæ. 1771. tom. iii. p. 533.

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NOTE E. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 142.*)

Non enim homo sed Deus separat quos Romanus Pontifex (qui non puri hominis sed veri Dei vicem gerit in terris),

Ecclesiarum necessitate vel utilitate pensata, non humana sed divina potius auctoritate dissolvit. Decretal. D. Gregor. Pap. ix. lib. i. de transl. Episc. tit. 7. c. 3. Corp. Jur. Canon. ed. Lugd. 1624. tom. ii. Decretal. col. 217.

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NOTE F. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 143.*)

Unde dicitur habere cœleste arbitrium ... et ideo etiam naturam rerum immutat, substantialia unius rei applicando alii arg. ... et de nullo potest aliquid facere ... et sententiam quæ nulla est, facit aliquam.... Quia in his quæ vult, ei est pro ratione voluntas ... nec est qui ei dicat, cur ita facis ... ipse enim potest supra jus dispensare... Idem de injustitia potest facere justitiam corrigendo jura et mutando ... et plenitudinem obtinet potestatis.... Glossa in loc. cit. *ibid.*

Credere..... Dominum Deum nostrum Papam ..... non potuisse statuere prout statuit, hæreticum censeretur. Gloss. in Extrav. Joan. xxii. tit. xiv. c. 4. verb. *Declaramus*. Ed. Paris. 1585. col. 153. These words occur in various editions of the Canon Law printed at Lyons and Paris, and certainly as late as a Paris edition of 1612. But in more recent editions the word “Deum” is omitted.

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NOTE G. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 143.*)

Tu denique alter Deus in terris. Christoph. Marcell. Orat. in sess. quart. Lateran. Concil. V. Vide Concil. ed. Labb. et Cossart. Lut. Par. 1671, 2. tom. xiv. col. 109.

Quapropter Bernardus ad Eugenium tamquam ad summum hierarchicum in cœlo Ecclesiæ virum, in quo erat omnis potestas supra omnes potestates, tam cœli quam terræ, recte scripserat, Tibi data est omnis potestas, &c. Steph. Arch. Patrac. Orat. in sess. dec. ejusdem Concil. *ibid.* col. 269.

And the same thing is asserted in the Gloss of Peter Bertrand on the Canon Law, published by the authority of



the Church, as follows,—Christus commisit summo Pontifici vices suas ... sed Christo data erat omnis potestas in cœlo et in terra ... ergo summus Pontifex qui est ejus vicarius habebit hanc potestatem. Gloss. in Extrav. Commun. lib. 1. De majoritate et obed. c. 1. verb. *Porro subesse Rom. Pontif.* Vide Corp. Juris Canon. ed. Lugd. 1624. tom. iii. Extrav. Comm. col. 212.

In fact, the Canon Law itself indirectly recognizes the title “God” as belonging to the Pope, as appears from the following words occurring in the first part of it, namely, the Decree of Gratian,—Quem [*i.e.* Pontificem] constat a pio principe Constantino....Deum appellatum, nec posse Deum ab hominibus judicari, manifestum est. Decret. Grat. Pars i. dist. 96. c. 7. Corp. Jur. Canon. Lugd. 1624. tom. i. Decret. Grat. col. 467.

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#### NOTE H. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 143.*)

Omnia nomina, quæ in Scripturis tribuuntur Christo, unde constat eum esse supra Ecclesiam, eadem omnia tribuuntur Pontifici. BELLARM. De Concil. auct. ii. 17. Op. ed. Col. Agripp. 1619. tom. ii. col. 95.

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#### NOTE I. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 144.*)

See Ceremoniale Romanum.

There are several distinct adorations of the Pope after his election. The first is immediately after he is elected, when he is carried in his chair before the altar of the chapel near at hand, and the Cardinals adore him upon their knees, kissing his foot and his right hand. The same day, at a later period, he is similarly carried and set down upon the altar of Sixtus's Chapel, and there the Cardinals adore him a second time. As soon as this second adoration is over, the Cardinals descend into the middle of St. Peter's Church, and the Pope follows, carried in his pontifical chair, under a

canopy, and is then seated on the high altar of St. Peter, with his feet upon the altar, where the Cardinals adore him a third time. Other adorations follow at thrones erected for him in different places.

Bernard Picart, in his "Religious Ceremonies and Customs," &c., has given a full account of the ceremonies attending the election, adoration, &c., of a new Pope.

An account of the ceremony of adoration may also be found in a book more easily accessible to the general reader, namely, Dr. C. Wordsworth's Letters to M. Gondon, on the destructive character of the Church of Rome; with Sequel. Lond. 1847, 1848. 2 vols. 8vo.

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NOTE K. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page* 145.)

See Bishop Stillingfleet's Discourse concerning the Idolatry practised in the Church of Rome, 2nd ed. Lond. 1671. 8vo, and in his "Works," vol. 5. pp. 1 et seq.; followed by his "Answer to several Treatises occasioned by a Book entitled, A Discourse, &c.," and "A Defence of the Discourse concerning &c.," in the same vol. of his "Works." Also his "Several Conferences between a Romish Priest, a fanatic Chaplain, and a Divine of the Church of England, concerning the idolatry of the Church of Rome," in vol. 6 of his "Works." Archbishop Tenison's "Of Idolatry." Lond. 1678. 4to. Bishop Barlow's Remains, pp. 203 and 228. Dean Sherlock's Discourse concerning the Object of Religious Worship. Lond. 1688. 4to. Archbishop Wake's Discourse concerning the Nature of Idolatry, in which the charge of idolatry is made good against those of the Church of Rome. Lond. 1687. 4to. Dan. Whitby, "On the Idolatry of the Church of Rome," &c. &c.

The awful idolatry of the Church of Rome, as it respects the Worship of the Virgin Mary, needs no other proof than what is afforded by a book entitled, "The Glories of Mary," written in Italian, by Alphonsus de Liguori, and translated



into English and published with the formal approval of Cardinal Wiseman. I will give a few quotations from the edition of 1852. Of Mary it is said, that "she opens the abyss of the mercy of God to whomsoever she wills, when she wills, and as she wills," (p. 16) and "that the Son is under great obligation to her for having given him his humanity." (p. 17.) "We say that Mary is the mediatrix of grace." "Whatever graces we receive, they come to us through her intercession."... "There is certainly nothing contrary to faith in this, but the reverse; it is quite in accordance with the sentiments of the Church, which in its public and approved prayers teaches us continually to have recourse to this Divine Mother, and to invoke her as the 'health of the weak, the refuge of sinners, the help of Christians, and as *our life and hope.*'" (pp. 124, 125.) "Shall we scruple to ask her to save us, when 'the way of salvation is open to none otherwise than through Mary.'" (p. 135.) Of the prayers to be addressed to her, the following may serve as a specimen. "'I am thine; save me.' Accept me, O Mary, for thine own, and as thine take charge of my salvation." (pp. 20, 21.) "Thou hast all power to change hearts, take thou mine and change it." (p. 42.) "Behold, O Mother of my God, my only hope, Mary, behold at thy feet a miserable sinner, who asks thee for mercy. Thou art proclaimed and called by the whole Church and by all the faithful the refuge of sinners. Thou art consequently my refuge, thou hast to save me.....I present thee, O my Mother, the sufferings of Jesus." (p. 58.) "Thou art the Queen of heaven, the Mistress of the universe." (p. 77.)

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NOTE L. TO SERMON VIII. (*Page 147.*)

The notoriety of the instance mentioned in the sermon is such that no special reference is needed in proof of it. And the same may be said of other recent instances of pretended miracles, such as the alleged appearance of the Virgin

Mary to a child at La Salette, which have been recorded in the daily Journals.

But there are various works in which the subject has been formally discussed, among which are the following :—The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin. 1688. 4to. Gabriel D’Emillian’s Frauds of Romish Priests and Monks. 1691. 8vo. Do., Journey to Naples, being a continuation of Frauds, &c. 1691. 8vo. Bishop Fleetwood’s Essay on Miracles, in his Works. 1737. fol. pp. 125 et seq. Do., Life and Miracles of St. Winifrede, *ibid.* pp. 593 et seq. The Notes of the Church as laid down by Card. Bellarmine examined and refuted. Lond. 1688. 4to. (See reply to 11th Note on ‘The Glory of Miracles.’) J. Serces, *Traité sur les Miracles.* Amst. 1729. sm. 8vo.

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## NOTES TO SERMON IX.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON IX. (*Page 156.*)

THUS, in the Hindoo Mythology there are “sculptured figures, copied by Sonnerat from one of their oldest pagodas,” one of which “represents Creeshna [who is an incarnation of the Mediatorial Deity Veeshnu] dancing on the *crushed head* of the serpent, and the other the same personage entangled in its enormous folds, to mark the arduousness of the contest, while the enraged reptile is seen *biting his foot.*” (Maurice’s History of Hindostan, vol. 2. p. 290.)

This representation was of an age long anterior to the times of our Saviour. There are some parts of the modern Hindoo Mythology which seem to have been later additions



derived from some imperfect knowledge of the facts of Christianity. (See Faber's *Eight Dissert.* Lond. 1845. Diss. 7. c. 4. vol. 2. pp. 110—113.)

“In the Gothic Mythology, Thor is represented as the firstborn of the principal divinity; and is exhibited as a middle deity, a mediator between God and man. (*Edda*, Fab. xi.) With regard to his actions, he is said to have wrestled with death, and in the struggle to have been brought upon one knee (*ib.* Fab. xxv.); to have bruised the head of the great serpent with his mace (*ib.* Fab. xxvii.); and in his final engagement with that monster, to beat him to the earth and slay him. The victory, however, is not obtained but at the expense of his own life. Recoiling back nine steps, he falls dead upon the spot, suffocated with the floods of venom which the serpent vomits forth upon him. (*Ib.* Fab. xxxii.)” (Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*, 2nd. ed. 1818. vol. 1. pp. 77, 78.)

There are evident traces also of the tradition arising out of this early promise in the story of Hercules trampling with his foot upon the head of the serpent appointed to guard the golden apples in the gardens of the Hesperides, and brandishing his club in triumph; a scene supposed by Eratosthenes\* to be represented in the constellation of the serpent.

The story is referred to by Lucret. *De nat. rer.* v. 33. Virg. *Æneid.* iv. 482. Apollon. Rhod. *apud Nat. Com.* lib. vii. 7.

So Apollo, a son of the supreme deity, and himself a god, was worshipped at Delphi and Tegyra and Delos and all the other temples dedicated to him, as one who had slain the serpent, Python, and hence is celebrated, according to Callimachus, as one born by his mother as a Saviour of mankind. *Εὐθὺν σὲ μήτηρ—Γείνατ' ἁοσητῆρα.* Callim. Hymn. in Apoll. 102, 3. ed. Blomfield. pp. 10, 11.

Respecting these traditions about Hercules and Apollo, and

\* Eratosth. *Catasterism.* § 3, 4. ad calc. Arati *Phænomen.* Oxon. 1672. 8vo.

their bearing on this subject, and some other similar traditions among the Greeks, see “The Testimony of Profane Antiquity to the account given by Moses of Paradise and the Fall of Man, by Matth. Bridges. Lond. 1825.” 8vo. pp. 164—191.

These and similar fables among other Pagan nations clearly point to one common origin, and that one manifestly an early tradition, arising out of the promise recorded in Gen. iii. 15. And they show what was the meaning attached from the first to that promise.

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NOTE B. TO SERMON IX. (*Page 158.*)

Thus, for instance, Porphyry, in the third century, in the twelfth of his fifteen books against the Christians, asserts that a portion of the prophecies of Daniel must have been written after the events to which they refer had taken place, so exactly did he find them agree with the circumstances of history. And what appeared to him as obscure he put down as false. But when we know that his statement as to the age of those prophecies is false, his witness as to the correspondence between the prophecies and the events of history is the best testimony we could have to the perfect foreknowledge displayed in them; as Jerome has remarked in his prefatory observations on the Book of Daniel.

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NOTE C. TO SERMON IX. (*Page 163.*)

The longing expectation with which the heathen nations in various parts of the world looked forward to the coming of some great future Deliverer who should inaugurate a reign of peace, happiness, and prosperity throughout the earth, is fully shown by various heathen records that remain to us. The late learned Mr. Faber,\* in his “Eight Dissertations on certain

\* The Rev. G. S. Faber, whose many learned works extend over a period of about half a century, and whose reward in the Church of England was to be made Master of Sherborne Hospital, where he died a few years ago, aged about 75.



connected prophetic passages of Holy Scripture,"\* has given the principal testimonies that are to be found respecting it. The same subject has been discussed by Bishop Horsley in his "Dissertation on the Prophecies of the Messiah dispersed among the heathen," prefixed to his "Nine Sermons on the Resurrection." But the Bishop's Dissertation is almost wholly confined to a discussion of the nature and probable origin of the Sibylline oracles. Various classical testimonies are given in Matthew Bridges's "Testimony of Profane Antiquity to the account given by Moses of Paradise and the Fall of Man. Lond. 1825." 8vo. Further information will also be found in Tob. Eckhardi "Non-christianorum de Christo testimonia. Quedlinburg. 1736." 4to; the second chapter of which is, "De testimonio Sibyllarum et aliorum ante Christum natum." pp. 29—85; and the third, "De justo Platonico." pp. 86—109; and Lardner's *Credibility, &c.* P. 1. B. 1. ch. 5. See also Nolan's "The Expectations formed by the Assyrians that a great Deliverer would appear about the time of our Lord's Advent demonstrated. Lond. 1826." 8vo.

The Sibylline Oracles are doubtless the most remarkable of these testimonies. And it appears that from these a prophecy was made public at Rome a few months before the birth of Augustus Cæsar, 63 years before the Christian era, "Regem populo Romano naturam parturire." (Sueton. in vita Augusti, c. 94.) But as the original collection of the Sibylline Oracles was destroyed by fire about 80 years before the Christian era, this quotation must have been made from the collection that was gathered from various quarters about seven years after their destruction to be substituted in their place; and a question arises whether this prophecy was in the earlier collection or only in the later. Bp. Horsley takes the former view; Mr. Faber the latter,

\* Dissert. vi. c. 6, and Dissert. vii. throughout. vol. 2. pp. 47—115. ed. Lond. 1845. 8vo. See also his *Horæ Mosaicæ*. 2nd. ed. Lond. 1818. 8vo. vol. 1. pp. 77—86.

chiefly on the ground (and a strong ground it is) that if the earlier collection contained a prophecy so nearly approximating to the time when the Messiah was to appear, it would have had a more definite notice on the subject than even the Jewish prophecies of the same period contained; while it is easy to suppose, that the notice in the later collection might have for its source a Jewish prophecy, such as that of Daniel.

But however this may be, certain it is, that the prophecy was well known to the Romans, at least from the period of the new collection of the Sibylline verses being made, and was the source for some time of ardent expectations of a coming golden age, and was afterwards applied by regal flatterers to several of the first Emperors of Rome.

The expectations raised by it we may see in Virgil's fourth Eclogue, written u.c. 714, B.C. 40, dedicated to C. Asinius Pollio, whom he flatters as being consul in the year when the birth of the great Deliverer should take place, whom he designates as the real Apollo.

Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas ;  
 Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.  
 Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna :  
 Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.  
 Tu modò nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum  
 Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,  
 Casta fave Lucina : tuus jam regnat Apollo.

And he proceeds to describe, in language which certainly savours strongly of a Jewish origin, the blessings that should abound in his time :—

Ipsæ lacte domum referent distenta capellæ  
 Ubra : nec magnos metuent armenta leones.  
 Ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores :  
 Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni  
 Occidet : Assyrium vulgo nascetur amomum.

\* \* \* \* \*

Cara Deûm soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum



Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,  
Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum :  
Aspice venturo lætentur ut omnia sæclo.

Ecl. iv. vv. 4—10, 21—25, 49—52.

But when, in after years, Augustus had become Emperor, then the poet, not unnaturally perhaps as a Roman, beholding the triumphs of Augustus over the then known world and the blessings of peace everywhere diffused, finds in him the fulfilment of the prophecy. See *Æneid*. vi. 791—800.

We have also the following testimony of Suetonius, with reference to the period shortly preceding the fall of Jerusalem :—“*Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de Imperatore quantum eventu postea patuit prædictum Judæi ad se trahentes rebellarunt.*” (Sueton. in *vita Vespas.* c. 4.) The words “*Judæa profecti rerum potirentur*” seem remarkably to correspond with Balaam’s prophecy. (*Numb.* xxiv. 19.)

The prophecy, therefore, was well known throughout the East as well as the West. And its Jewish origin, so far as the East is concerned, seems clear from its very terms.

A practical proof of the existence of such a prophecy in the East at the time of our Saviour’s birth is afforded us by the visit of the Eastern Magi to Jerusalem at that period, with the inquiry, “Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him.” (*Matt.* ii. 2.)

The expectations prevalent among the Hindoos are to be found in the Indian Puranas, from which extracts are given illustrating this subject in the *Asiatic Researches*, vol. x. pp. 27, 28, and 47, 48. For the views of the Chinese on the subject may be consulted *Du Halde’s China*, vol. i. pp. 360, 361; *Le Compte’s China*, pp. 118, 200.

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NOTE D. TO SERMON IX. (*Page* 163.)

The Jews have most unreasonably availed themselves of

the prophecy in Malachi to prove that Jesus of Nazareth could not be the promised Messiah, because his countrymen did not delight in him. But this is a mere misrepresentation of the prophecy, which only expresses the feeling with which the Jewish nation looked forward to the promised Messiah, which was clearly a feeling of joy and delight. The words of Malachi are evidently intended to express the sentiments of the prophet's own day towards the great promised Deliverer. He says nothing of the treatment the Messiah should personally experience when He came. But this treatment is expressly predicted by Isaiah, and the prophecies of Isaiah on the subject were exactly fulfilled.

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### *NOTES TO SERMON X.*

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#### NOTE A. TO SERMON X. (*Page 180.*)

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#### ON DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

THIS prophecy with its context runs thus, according to our authorized English version :—

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two



weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Dan. ix. 24—27.)

It is quite possible that this prophecy, like most of those in Isaiah,\* may have had a double reference.†

The word "weeks" used in it is capable of being understood both in the sense of weeks of *days*, and in that of weeks of *years*, as it literally signifies only *septenaries*. And there is apparently an intentional ambiguity in its use here, because in the very next chapter (x. 2, 3) we find the full phrase "weeks of days." If therefore weeks of days only were intended here, we should have expected to find the same phrase. That the word translated *week* was used for seven years as well as seven days, is clear from Gen. xxix. 27, "Fulfil her week"—meaning seven years. And other authorities might be added.

Now, as the prophecy is a reply to Daniel's supplication that God would look in compassion upon His people the Jews in their captivity, and not defer any longer to show mercy to them and their city Jerusalem, and bring about the predicted deliverance from that captivity, it is not unlikely, in the abstract, that the gracious message delivered by the angel in answer to this prayer should have some reference to the deliverance, shortly about to be effected for the Jews by the decree of Cyrus, which allowed them to return to their own land and rebuild the temple and city.

This message, then, being delivered at some period in the first year of Darius, who reigned only two years, and the

\* See Lowth on Is. xl., at the beginning.

† This is the view of it taken by Wintle.

Edict of Cyrus being issued in his first year, if we suppose that it was delivered towards the end of the first year, and that the Edict of Cyrus was issued soon after his accession, as is likely, there might be just seventy weeks of days intervening between the angel's appearance and the Edict of Cyrus.

And the words of v. 24 have been interpreted so as to relate to what happened at the promulgation of the Edict of Cyrus. The words "to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins," are referred, by a common figure of speech, to the completion of the punishment for their sins. "To make reconciliation for iniquity," is said to refer to the sufferings endured by them as a punishment for their sins. "To bring in everlasting righteousness," to signify the re-introduction among them of the everlasting principles of holiness and truth. "To seal up the vision and prophecy," or literally the vision of the prophet, to mean the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prediction of the seventy years' captivity. And the "anointing of the most holy," to be the re-consecration of the sacred vessels of the temple, restored by Cyrus to their proper uses.

But it seems almost impossible to contemplate this interpretation without seeing that it scarcely gives to the words their full sense and meaning. And I have great doubts whether the prophecy was ever meant to be so applied. The prophet already understood (see Dan. ix. 1, 2.) when the seventy years of the captivity were to cease, and with them "the desolations of Jerusalem." But when he prayed for the Divine blessing on his people, he was warned that, after the complete restoration from the captivity, there was a still further period of trial and probation to elapse before the coming of the promised Messiah, and that when He came he should be cut off, and this event be succeeded by the destruction of the City and Temple. But the gloomy end of this revelation was relieved by the brightness of others vouchsafed to him.

And, when we come to the subsequent part of the pro-



phesy, we see clearly that that part of it at least cannot be made to refer to the restoration of the Jews under the Edict of Cyrus. For, during the period there prophesied of, it is said, "the street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublous times;" which was not fulfilled in the time of Cyrus. This part of the prophecy, therefore, *must* be understood as to be calculated by *years*, not *days*. And a portion of the prophecy seems to be referred to by our Blessed Lord even in his time, as alluding to an event even then future, when he warned his hearers that when they "saw the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place," they were to flee to the mountains (Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14), showing that it was an event still to come. Now, though this part of the prophecy does not seem to me to come within the precise period of the seventy weeks spoken of in it, yet it is clearly closely connected with the events that were to take place in the course of those weeks, and therefore those events could not all have taken place in the time of Cyrus.

And seventy weeks being the period mentioned in both parts, it is probable that, even if there is a primary reference in v. 24 to the weeks of days that were to elapse before the Decree of Cyrus brought about the deliverance more immediately looked for by Daniel, the chief reference in *both* is to the weeks of years that were to precede the coming of Christ.

Our English translation, indeed, of v. 25, "Know *therefore* and understand, &c.," which is the Vulgate translation, would imply that what followed was merely a further explanation of what had been stated in v. 24. But this hardly seems borne out by the original. The more common modern translation is, "*And* know and understand," or, "*And* thou shalt know and understand," according to the versions of the Septuagint and Theodotion. And Wintle, disconnecting the sense still more from the preceding verse, translates, "*Yet* know and understand," &c.

It cannot be *proved*, therefore, that the periods mentioned

in the two parts of this prophecy are identical. While nevertheless, as they are both of the same duration, and the terms in v. 24 are such as hardly to admit of being limited to the effects of the Edict of Cyrus, we may reasonably conclude that they are so, and that the *whole* prophecy has special reference to the events of the seventy weeks of years.

Now, according to the prophecy, those seventy septenaries of years, or 490 years, are to be reckoned from the time of the “going forth of the commandment (or rather, as it should be translated, *a* commandment) to restore and to build Jerusalem (or rather, as the Bishops’ Bible translates it, “to bring back the people\* and build Jerusalem”);” and from this period to the appearance of Messiah the Prince, sixty-nine septenaries, or 483 years, were to elapse, and shortly after the expiration of these septenaries, and before another septenary had terminated, Messiah was to be cut off.

The translation of verses 26, 27 in our Authorized Version might, I think, be a little improved. So far as the chronology is concerned, the sense would remain the same. But a little revision of the translation would much clear the meaning of the passage. I would suggest the following:—

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not his [followers, or kingdom]. And the people of the Prince that is to come [*i. e.* “Messiah the Prince,” as he is called in the preceding verse] shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. And the end thereof shall be a flood [*i. e.* a sweeping destruction], and at [or unto] the end of the war the decreed desolations.

“Yet [nevertheless] he shall confirm the covenant with many during one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. And by the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the decreed consumption [or, all-consuming destruction] shall be poured upon the desolate.”

We may paraphrase the whole passage thus:—

\* See the defence of this translation by Grier, Prolus. in loc. p. 740.



It is decreed that a period of seventy septenaries of years, or 490 years, shall be granted to thy people, the Jews, and thy holy city Jerusalem, in which their transgression shall be brought to its full measure, and their sins be sealed, by the crucifixion of their promised Messiah, in which an atonement shall be offered for sin and an everlasting righteousness brought in for the justification of the sinner, in which all the prophecies shall be sealed by their full and perfect accomplishment, and the most Holy be anointed, and appear as the Messiah or Christ in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Know also and understand, that from the promulgation of an edict permitting the Jews to return to their country and rebuild Jerusalem, to the period of the public appearance of the Messiah the Prince, seven weeks and sixty-two weeks shall elapse. The street shall be built again and the wall, even in a time when the Jews shall be greatly troubled by their enemies. And after the expiration of the sixty-two weeks, *i. e.* before another week has terminated, the Messiah shall be cut off from the earth, but not his kingdom or followers. And the people of that Prince, the Messiah whom I have spoken of as about to come, that is, the Gentiles represented by the Roman armies, shall destroy the city and the temple, (in the words of our Lord, He shall “send forth *His* armies,” the Romans being thus recognised as acting as his agents, “and destroy those murderers and burn up their city,” Matt. xxii. 7), and their city and temple shall be destroyed as by a flood that sweeps everything away with it, and upon this destruction by the sword of war shall remain desolate as predicted. But, notwithstanding this rejection of the Jewish nation, and the destruction of their city and temple, with many of the Jews, during the space of seven years, the Messiah shall confirm the New Covenant, causing them to become his disciples, and in the middle year of those seven he shall cause the sacrifices and oblations of the Mosaic law to cease by the offering up of that sacrifice of himself of which they were types, and which were only accepted by God as such, and which, therefore, in the sight of God, and

in their validity and virtue, will cease immediately the anti-type has been offered. And by the devastating and idolatrous Roman armies\* he shall make the city desolate, until the fulfilment of the time appointed for the punishment of the Jews and the Divine dereliction of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.

It seems to me clear, that "the Prince that is to come," mentioned in verse 26, is the same as the Prince predicted in the preceding verse; for the words show, that he had been spoken of before as about to come, and no other Prince had been alluded to. And this is Wintle's view of the meaning of the words. And at the destruction of Jerusalem our Lord came as a Prince, and the Roman armies were his agents, "his armies," as our Lord himself calls them,† and the Gentiles who trod down Jerusalem might properly be called his people, the Gentile Dispensation having commenced on the rejection of the Jews.

\* To this part of the prophecy our Lord plainly refers when he gives the warning,—“When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judæa flee to the mountains” (Matt. xxiv. 15, 16): and again, “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.” (Luke xxi. 20.) And it appears from Josephus (*De Bell. Jud.* ii. 19. 4, 5), that shortly before the period of the commencement of the siege by Titus, Cestius Gallus once penetrated with his army into the upper city, and thus the Roman armies and their standards, which were an abomination in the sight of the Jews on account of the idolatrous worship paid to them, and were the means and precursors of the impending desolation, came into the holy city, as Jerusalem is called in ver. 24, and in Matt. iv. 5. But Cestius Gallus unexpectedly withdrawing, the Christians recognising in this fact the proof of the approaching fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy as alluded to by our Lord, and recollecting our Lord's warning, availed themselves of the opportunity of escaping from the city.

The expression here used by Daniel, “the abomination by which he shall make desolate,” is clearly that which our Lord refers to as “the abomination of desolation;” in other words, the Roman armies.

† Matt. xxii. 7.



Reading the passage in this sense, the translation I have proposed of the previous words, "the Messiah shall be cut off, but not his [followers or kingdom]," gives them a force which does not seem to me to belong to any other translation I have seen, though I admit it to be new. Immediately after the prediction that the Messiah should be cut off, the prophet being about to advert to His victories as a Prince, adds directly, that nevertheless His followers and power and authority will not perish, but that the people of that same Messiah, who was to come as a Prince, should punish those by whom he was cut off and destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The language may be compared with that in Is. liii. 10. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands," &c. He was to be cut off, but his kingdom and people would flourish the more.

The translation of our English authorized version, "but not for himself," seems to me, to say the least, jejune. And the other translations that have been proposed, of which there are many, seem rather to add a sense to the words which they do not contain, than to educe from the words the sense they do contain.

Now, if the period referred to in vv. 25—27 is not identical with the period mentioned in v. 24, then, I admit, it is not necessary to suppose that the "one week" here mentioned distinct from the sixty-nine, was immediately consecutive to them. But if those two periods are identical, as I hold them to be, then the notice of the period in v. 24 as consisting of 70 weeks admits fairly of no other interpretation but that of the seventy weeks being *continuous* weeks.

For, when it is said, that "seventy weeks are determined," &c., it is impossible to suppose, that those words meant anything else than a certain definite period of time consisting of the years so mentioned. If even one week is to be reckoned

at an interval from the remaining weeks, the prophecy becomes altogether indefinite, and ceases to be any certain note of time. It is true that the period seems to be subdivided into three parts, consisting of seven septenaries, sixty-two septenaries and one septenary respectively; but if any interval of time is supposed to elapse between any two of these periods, there is no reason why there should not be a similar interval between the other two, and the whole prophecy becomes vague and ambiguous. It appears to me, therefore, that we must at once reject the notion of some commentators, that there is an interval of time to be allowed between the first sixty-nine weeks and the last week. The notion has arisen from the supposition that the words of the prophecy require that our Lord's crucifixion should take place exactly at the end of the sixty-nine weeks, and then the prediction of the ceasing of the sacrifices in the middle of the last or seventieth week could only be interpreted by referring it to what took place shortly before the destruction of the temple by the Romans. But the prophecy only states, that from the going forth of the command to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah, should be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, and that *after* those sixty-two weeks the Messiah should be cut off; words which by no means imply that He was to be cut off exactly at the period of their conclusion, but rather the contrary; for such an interpretation identifies the period of his appearance with that of his being cut off, which seems inadmissible. But they do, I think, lead us to suppose that he was to be cut off before another week had elapsed. And another week remains of the seventy, in which this event might find its place in strict accordance with the terms of the prophecy. And the words used in another part of this same prophecy respecting the remaining week seem clearly to point to this event as occurring in the middle of the last or seventieth week. For, when it is said, speaking apparently of the last week of the seventy, that "he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, *and in the midst of the week shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,*" the



prophet seems clearly to point to that event, which at once in the sight of God put an end to the sacrifices and oblations of the Old Law.

Assuming, then, that the years referred to in this prophecy are to be interpreted as consecutive years, it follows that no calculation of these years from any one of the four Edicts mentioned in Scripture as having been published by the Kings of Persia for the building of the temple or city of Jerusalem will bring their termination even near the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, A.D. 70.

For, the first by Cyrus was confessedly much more than the whole of the 490 years from the first year of the Christian era.

The same is the case with the Edict of Darius, which Dean Prideaux (Conn. of O. and N. T. Hist. Pt. 1. bk. 5.) has clearly proved to have been issued by Darius Hystaspes, and not by Darius Nothus, as supposed by Scaliger.

Moreover, as it has been clearly proved by Prideaux,\* and others,† that the Artaxerxes who, in the 7th and 20th years of his reign, issued the last two of the four Edicts, was Artaxerxes Longimanus, and not Artaxerxes Mnemon or Artaxerxes Ochus, it is evident that 490 years from either of these Edicts will not extend to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The destruction of Jerusalem, therefore, was not an event which was to come within the period of the 490 years.

Nor do the words of the prophecy intimate this, but only that it was an event that would stand in close connexion with those that were to happen *within* the 490 years. The events that were to characterize the sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth week are distinctly pointed out, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and its subsequent state of desolation, are spoken of as distinct events following the cutting off of the Messiah.

\* Ibid.

† See Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia, and Rawlinson's Herodotus, iv. 260, 261, note.

The events that were to take place, according to the prophecy, during the 490 years, seem to be the following:—

1st. That at the end of 69 septenaries of years, or 483 years from the issue of the Decree, the Messiah was publicly to appear.

2dly. That in the middle year of the 70th septenary of years the Messiah was to be cut off, and thus the sacrifices and offerings of the Jewish law in the sight of God to cease and be abrogated.

3dly. That during the 70th septenary the Messiah was to establish the covenant with many of the Jews.

Now, of the four Edicts above mentioned, the first two are excluded from our consideration by the fact, that 490 years from either of them would not reach even to the period of our Lord's birth.

We have to inquire, therefore, whether either of the Edicts of Artaxerxes, which Scripture informs us were issued in the 7th and 20th years of his reign, will suit the conditions of the prophecy.

And here first we must ascertain in what year Artaxerxes commenced his reign.

According to Ptolomy's Canon (the best and most impartial authority to which we can refer), the reign of Artaxerxes commenced in the year 284 of the Nabonassarean era, which began on Dec. 17, 465 B.C., reckoning in Julian years.\* And the principle on which Ptolomy's Canon is constructed is to reckon each king's reign as beginning on the first day of the first month (Thoth) of the year in which

\* See Clinton, *Fasti Hellen.* ii. 312. Hales's *Chronol.* i. 164. Calvisii *Opus Chronol. Francof. ad Moen.* 1685. p. 79. Petavii *Rationarium temporum.* Franec. 1689. 8vo. par. ii. p. 268. The last two give the whole Canon in the original Greek. Claudius Ptolomæus (or Ptolemæus) was a celebrated Alexandrian mathematician and astronomer, and flourished in the reign of the second Antoninus. The Canon that goes under his name was probably commenced by Hipparchus, or some earlier astronomer, so far as concerns the reigns of the Chaldæan and Persian kings, and continued by Ptolomy.



that king succeeded to the throne ; the number of years of each king's reign being limited to the number of complete years to which his reign extended, reckoning from that time.\* So that while, according to the principle of the Canon, the reign of Artaxerxes is reckoned as beginning with the first day of the year 284 of the Nabonassarean era, we only know from it that the *actual* commencement of the reign was some time in the course of that year.†

Now the time of the year when he began to reign seems determinable from Ezra and Nehemiah. It appears from Nehem. i. 1 and ii. 1, that in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes, and consequently in the other years of his reign, the first Hebrew month,‡ Nisan (March—April), came *after* the ninth, Chisleu (Nov.—Dec.) Consequently the date of his accession must have been some time between Nisan and Chisleu. And from Ezra vii. 7—10 it follows, that, in the 7th and therefore in the other years of his reign, the

\* See Clinton and Hales, *ibid*.

† The Nabonassarean era was instituted by Nabonassar, king of Babylon, who destroyed the records of the reigns of his predecessors in order that the computation of the reigns of the Chaldæan kings might be made from himself. It consequently began with the commencement of the reign of Nabonassar, Feb. 26, B.C. 747. And the Canon called Ptolomy's commences with this period, and assigns to Nabonassar and the kings that came after him the number of *complete* years of 365 days that each reigned, reckoning any remaining portion of a year that might fall to his reign in the reign of his successor ; and giving in two columns the number of years of each reign, and the collected number of years from the beginning of the era at the end of each reign. Thus :—

Ναβονασσάρου ..... ιδ ... ιδ

\* \* \* \* \*

Ξέρξου ..... κα ... σπγ

Ἀραξέρξου α ..... μα ... τκδ

(See Petav. loc. cit. pp. 266, 268. Calvis. l. c. p. 79.)

‡ The ecclesiastical year, which was that referred to by the prophets, commenced with Nisan. Thus, in Nehem. viii. 14, the Feast of Tabernacles was directed to be kept in the 7th month, and that feast was kept on and after the 15th of Tisri, which month commenced on the 15th of our September. And Zechariah (viii. 1) says, that “the word of the Lord came to him in the fourth day of the 9th month, even in Chisleu.”

fifth month, Ab (July—Aug.), came *after* the first or Nisan. Therefore the accession of Artaxerxes was somewhere between the latter end of July and the former part of November, *i. e.* somewhere about the summer of 464 B.C.

Therefore the 7th year of Artaxerxes was from the summer of 458 to the summer of 457.\*

Moreover it appears from Ezra vii. 8—10 that Ezra *started* from Babylon to Jerusalem, in accordance with the Decree issued by Artaxerxes in his 7th year, on the *first* day of the *first* month, Nisan.

Therefore the Decree was issued a little previous to that period; and, as it is evident from Ezra's own account (Ezra vii. 28 and viii. throughout), that he took counsel with the whole body of the captive Jews upon the subject, convening a meeting at the river Ahava before they made their journey to Jerusalem, it is reasonable to suppose that the decree was issued at least a month or two previously. And therefore we must conclude that the Decree was issued *about* Jan. 457 B.C.†

I. According to the prophecy, then, at the end of 483 years from this period the Messiah was to appear.

Now, as there were different modes of calculating the

\* Mr. Clinton's date, therefore, for the actual accession of Artaxerxes in Feb., B.C. 464, is a few months too early. He says,—“The first *thoth* of Artaxerxes was equivalent to Dec. 17 B.C. 465, consequently, on the principles of the Canon, his true accession was subsequent to that day, or at least not prior to it. That accession being preceded by the seven months of Artabanus, the death of Xerxes is carried back to some point in the year of Nabonassar 283, corresponding with the beginning of the year of Lysitheus, conformably to the date of Diodorus. We may place the death of Xerxes in the first month of that archon (July B.C. 465), and the succession of Artaxerxes in the eighth month (February, B.C. 464).” (Clinton's *Fasti Hellen.* ii. 314.) But the time of year in which the succession of Artaxerxes took place, as shown by the above passages of Ezra and Nehemiah, proves that the death of Xerxes must have taken place later in the year.

† Of course the reference here is to the period of the Christian era, according to the *common reckoning*, not to the *real* time of our Lord's birth.



length of the year among the ancients, and much has been said by writers on this prophecy on the subject, we have first to consider, *which* computation was probably intended in this place. The hypothesis adopted by some authors for making this prophecy correspond with the events predicted in it, has induced them to advocate the notion, that the years were to consist of 360 days, according to the most ancient mode of reckoning. But as this incorrect mode of computation had long been laid aside at Babylon as erroneous, and was well known throughout the world in the time of Daniel to be seriously defective, it can hardly be supposed that the prophecy was founded upon such a faulty mode of reckoning. Among the Eastern nations, for centuries before the time of Daniel, the year had been reckoned as consisting of at least 365 days, and therefore no mode of reckoning less exact than this can fairly be considered as likely to be intended in this prophecy. And as in the space of 490 years the true mode of reckoning would only make the difference of about 120 days from this reckoning, the fulfilment of the prophecy may be sufficiently determined without our being able absolutely to prove that the year intended was the precise solar year. The event, however, will, I think, show the probability that such was the case, as might have been expected.

We have now to ascertain the dates of our Blessed Lord's birth and public appearance as the Messiah at his baptism. For, the latter event, when our Lord first appeared publicly as the Messiah, and commenced his ministry in that character, is of course the event to which we should look, rather than to his birth, as that which Daniel had in view in this prophecy.

Let us first endeavour to fix the true date of his birth. It is so well known and universally acknowledged, that those who first endeavoured to fix this date, and from whose calculations the common Christian era has ever since been reckoned, made an error in their computation, that I need not stop here to prove that the vulgar Christian era does

not exactly correspond with the real period of our Lord's birth. It is universally admitted that his birth took place at a period previous to the year 1 of the vulgar Christian era, or, as it is said, A.D. 1. We have to inquire, therefore, what that period was, and on this point there has been much difference of opinion, varying from the year B.C. 8 to B.C. 1.

First, then, we get an approximation to the true date, if we can fix the date of Herod's death; for our Lord must have been born some little time at least before Herod's death.

Now, Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* xvii. 6, 4), that an eclipse of the moon happened a few days before the death of Herod, and (*ib.* ix. 3; *De bell. Jud.* ii. 1, 3), that he died just before a Passover. This eclipse, therefore, must have happened in March or April. Now the only eclipse of the moon at this period of the year that happened within more than eight years preceding A.D. 1 was on March 13, B.C. 4, at 2.45 a.m., which must have been, therefore, the eclipse referred to by Josephus. And consequently Herod's death took place during the latter half of March, B.C. 4.

Another note of the time of his death is also given us by Josephus, who tells us (*Antiq.* xvii. 8, 1; *De bell. Jud.* i. 33, 8), that he reigned 34 years after he had caused Antigonus to be slain, and 37 after he had been declared king by the Romans; that is, according to the usual mode of reckoning at that time, that he had completed 33 and 36 years respectively after these events, and died in the course of the 34th and 37th. If, therefore, he died March, B.C. 4, these 33 and 36 years must have been completed either during the latter part of B.C. 5, or quite at the commencement of B.C. 4.

But Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* xiv. 14, 5), that Herod was made king by the Romans in the 184th Olympiad, when Caius Domitius Calvinus and Caius Asinius Pollio were consuls, the former for the second time. And the last year of the 184th Olympiad was from July B.C. 41 to July B.C. 40. Supposing, therefore, that Herod was made king towards



the close of B.C. 41, or at the commencement of B.C. 40, we have exactly 36 years for his reign expiring some little time before his death in March B.C. 4. And as the consuls mentioned are generally considered as belonging to B.C. 40, and were probably appointed in January, we have the precise date of the commencement of his reign about the latter part of January B.C. 40.

But Josephus also tells us that he died in the 34th year of his reign, after the death of Antigonus. Now, the capture of Jerusalem by Herod and Sosius, soon after which Antigonus was slain, took place, he tells us (*Antiq.* xiv. 16, 4), in the 185th Olympiad, when Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus were consuls at Rome, and in the third month (that is, of the civil year), which is Chisleu, lasting from November 25 to December 25. But the third year of the 185th Olympiad lasted from July B.C. 38 to July B.C. 37. As Antigonus, therefore, must have been put to death about the end of December B.C. 38, or early in January B.C. 37, we have 33 years completed between that time and December B.C. 5, or January B.C. 4. And if we are to conclude that the consuls named were appointed in January B.C. 37 (as they are generally attached to the year B.C. 37), we have a still more precise date for the period of the death of Antigonus. But the truth is, the precise time of the year when the consuls were appointed cannot be definitely fixed.

The calculation of Herod's death, in March B.C. 4, also agrees with the accounts of the banishment of his successor Archelaus, in the tenth year of his reign. (*Joseph. in Vita*, c. 1, and *Antiq.* xvii. 13, 2.) For in March A.D. 6, he would have reigned nine years. And Dio (lv. 25, 27) tells us that he was banished when Æmilius Lepidus and L. Arruntius were consuls, which was U.C. 759, or A.D. 6. And Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 2, 1) says that it was in the 37th year after the battle of Actium, which was in September U.C. 723, so that in September U.C. 759, 36 years were completed since the battle of Actium. And if Archelaus was banished towards

the close of the year, it would be in the tenth year of his reign, and the 37th from the battle of Actium.

It agrees also with the date assigned by Josephus (Antiq. xviii. 4, 6) to the death of the tetrarch Philip. For, he says, that he died in the 20th year of the reign of Tiberius, having ruled over Trachonitis &c. 37 years. Now, if he came to his government in the spring of B.C. 4, he completed his 36th year of government in the spring of A.D. 33. And Tiberius commenced the 20th year of his reign (reckoning, as Josephus does, from the death of Augustus) in the following August. So that, if Philip died at any time during the first three quarters of the 20th year of Tiberius, he would be said to have reigned 37 years, that is, 36 complete years, and a portion of a 37th year.

It also agrees with the dates on two coins of Herod Antipas, given in Eckhel, tom. iii. pp. 486, 487, which make the 43rd year of his reign current in A.D. 39, and, of course, the first in B.C. 4.\*

On the strength of all these testimonies, then, we may fairly consider it as proved, that the death of Herod took place in the latter end of March, B.C. 4.

Consequently, our Lord's birth must have taken place some little time *previous* to this.

Again, we obtain a limit to the period of our Lord's birth, in the *opposite* direction, by the statement of St. Luke, that in the fifteenth of Tiberius, our Lord was baptized by John the Baptist, and then "began to be about 30 years of age." (Luke iii. 1—23.)

What, then, was the date of the 15th of Tiberius? The inquiry is not to be answered immediately, because, as is well known, there were different modes of reckoning the years of the reigns of some of the Roman Emperors.

If we were to suppose that St. Luke reckoned his reign from the time of his becoming *sole* Emperor on the death

\* See Clinton's Fasti Rom. i. 22.



of Augustus, the 15th year was from August A.D. 28, to August A.D. 29. If, therefore, our Lord was thirty in the 15th of Tiberius, according to this calculation, he must have been born either in B.C. 3, or B.C. 2.

But from the date of Herod's death, it is clear that our Lord must have been born earlier than this, and that his birth could not have been later than the very beginning of B.C. 4, and in all probability not later than the close of B.C. 5.

It is evident, therefore, that St. Luke, who must have known our Lord's age, adopted some other mode of reckoning the years of the reign of Tiberius. And it is a well-known fact, that there was much discrepancy in the mode of reckoning the years of the reign of some of the Roman Emperors, particularly in the case of Augustus. (See Clinton, *Fasti Hellen.* iii. 276; and *Fasti Rom.* ii. 236, 7; Hales, i. 86.) "The two numbers in St. Luke," says Mr. Clinton, "the 15th year of Tiberius, and thirty years of age for Jesus at the Baptism, are irreconcilable with each other. But as it was impossible that St. Luke could have been ignorant of the age of Jesus, we are compelled to conclude that he computed the years of Tiberius in a peculiar manner." (Clinton, *Fasti Rom.* ii. 237.)

But the solution of the difficulty seems obvious, because history informs us that Tiberius was made by Augustus his *colleague* in the administration of the affairs of the Empire, about two years before his death. And this solution is adopted by Norisius, Pagi, Usher, Lardner, Hales, Greswell, and others. And it certainly does not lie open to the imputation cast upon it by Clinton, that "they have no other reason for selecting that particular year [*i.e.*, two years before the death of Augustus] as the epoch, than because it is adapted to their own dates for the Ministry of the Baptist." (Clinton, *Fasti Rom.* ii. 237.) For the historical testimony fixing that particular time is clear enough, as I will now endeavour to show.

Augustus died Aug. 19, A.D. 14. But Tiberius, his son-in-law, had been adopted by him as his son, and made, some time before this, his Colleague in the Empire, as Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius, and Tacitus all testify. “Filius, *collega imperii*, consors tribuniciæ potestatis adsumitur.” (Tacit. Annal. i. 3.) From the words of Velleius Paterculus it would appear, that this partnership in the Empire was conferred upon him about the time of his triumph on his return from Germany, A.U.C. 765, A.D. 12, (for the date, see Clinton, Fasti Hell. iii. 272); for he says,—“Cum res Galliarum maximæ molis, accensæque plebis Viennensium dissensiones, coercitione magis quam pœna mollisset, et Senatus Populusque Romanus, postulante Patre ejus, ut æquum ei jus in omnibus provinciis exercitibusque esset, quam erat ipsi, decreto complexus esset, . . . in urbem reversus, jampridem debitum sed continuatione bellorum dilatum ex Pannoniis Dalmatisque egit triumphum.” (Vell. Paterc. lib. 2. c. 121.) And as Velleius had served with him in Germany, and was present, according to his own testimony in the context of the above passage, at the triumph, his witness is the best we can have on the subject. Suetonius says,—“A Germania in urbem post biennium regressus triumphum quem distulerat egit . . . ac non multo post, lege per coss. lata, *ut provincias cum Augusto communiter administraret*, simulque censum ageret, condito lustro in Illyricum profectus est.” (Sueton. in Tiber. cc. 20, 21.) These words would seem to imply that Tiberius was made the colleague of Augustus shortly *after* his triumph. Putting the two accounts together, we may conclude that the real time must have been close upon the period of his triumph, whether it was a little before or a little after, and therefore about A.D. 12, two years before the death of Augustus. In the lustration that took place three or four months before the death of Augustus, it appears that he called upon Tiberius, as his colleague, to undertake the usual vows. (Vota quæ in proximum lustrum suscipi mos est, collegam suum Tiberium nuncupare jussit. Sueton. in Octav. c. 97.)



It is, therefore, quite in accordance with the facts of the case, that Luke should call the 13th year of the *sole* imperial power of Tiberius the fifteenth year of the rule of Tiberius (τῆς ἡγεμονίας Τιβερίου), according to a common mode of reckoning with the ancients in such cases. And, in fact, as the date of our Lord's birth was certainly some little time previous to Herod's death, when St. Luke intimates that our Lord was baptized in the fifteenth of Tiberius, and when he was about thirty years of age, we have merely to choose whether we will suppose that St. Luke thus reckoned the years of Tiberius, or whether he made a mistake as to our Lord's age. The latter certainly is not likely. And, in fact, Jewish customs render it probable that our Lord would begin his public ministry when he was about thirty.

According to this calculation, then, the 15th of Tiberius would be from the summer of A.D. 26, to the summer of A.D. 27. And 30 years backward from this period would take us to the latter half of B.C. 5, or the former half of B.C. 4.

Putting together, then, the two calculations, we find that our Lord's birth must have taken place between the summer of B.C. 5 and the beginning of B.C. 4. And as from the narrative given by the Evangelists of his parents presenting him in the Temple, when the 40 days of his mother's purification were fulfilled, and then returning with him to Nazareth (Luke ii. 22—39), and afterwards going down with him to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod, and remaining with him there till Herod's death (Matt. ii. 13—15 and 19—23), the birth could hardly have taken place nearer the period of Herod's death than the latter end of B.C. 5, and therefore we may reasonably accept the tradition that it took place in December, and consider the precise period to be Dec. 25, B.C. 5.\* In fact, we are limited to some day between the early part of September and the end of December.

\* This is the date assigned by Clinton. See his *Fasti Rom.* ii. 236. And this seems also to be the date assigned by Archbishop Usher.

We are able, therefore, at once to assign the date of our Lord's baptism. For as it was when he was beginning to be about 30 years old, (Luke iii. 23,) and our Lord was 30 on or about Dec. 25, A.D. 26, his baptism must have taken place about January A.D. 27; which, as we have seen, was in the 15th of Tiberius, according to St. Luke's reckoning.

Hengstenberg, in his elaborate commentary on this prophecy of Daniel (Christology, vol. 2), while he maintains that the years of Tiberius are to be reckoned from the death of Augustus, has entirely forgotten to meet the difficulty arising from the statement of St. Luke, as to our Lord's age. And when he remarks (ib.ii. 396, American transl.) that what he supposes to be an "error" in the common estimate of the duration of the reign of Xerxes "was committed as soon as only an *ιά* in an ancient authority was confounded with a *κά*," he has not observed that this will not account for the statement in the Canon of Ptolomy, because in that Canon not only is the number of years of each reign mentioned, but the number of the years of the Nabonassarean era at the end of each reign.

That the baptism took place in the beginning of the year, is to be inferred from the fact, that it occurred not long before the first Passover, which our Lord attended after it. The Author of the Paschal Chronicle, Pagi, and Norisius assign January 6 for the baptism. Greswell supposes it to have been on January 24.\* Several of the early Fathers say that the baptism took place early in January.†

We are thus enabled to fix, by historical testimony and proofs entirely independent of each other, both the dates of the issue of the Decree of Artaxerxes, and the date of the baptism of our Lord; and we find that the former was pro-

\* See Clinton, Fasti Rom. ii. 234.

† "A tradition has been preserved by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Jerom, and others, that our Saviour was baptized at the beginning of January." Burton's Chronol. of The Acts of the Apostles, p. 9.



mulgated about January 457 B.C., and that the latter took place about January A.D. 27. There were, therefore,  $457 + 26$  complete years, or exactly 483 years, as Daniel predicted, between the two. For the few days of the year A.D. 27 are wanted to complete those deficient in the year B.C. 457. That is, supposing the decree issued January 6, B.C. 457, and the baptism to have taken place January 6, A.D. 27, the six days of A.D. 27 must supply the six days deficient in B.C. 457, to make up the 483 full years. Be it remembered, however, that I do not pretend to *fix* either the date of the Decree or that of the baptism as *necessarily* occurring in *January*. *Either* event might have occurred a month or two before, or a little after January. The Decree might have been issued any time between the commencement of the 7th year of Artaxerxes, and a short period before the 1st of Nisan following. And the baptism of our Lord, as St. Luke only says that he then “began to be *about* 30,” might have taken place a month or so before December, or in February instead of January after.\* But the accomplishment of the prophecy is clearly not affected by our necessary ignorance of the precise *day* of these events.

There is one objection that has been raised to the notion that the edict issued in the 7th of Artaxerxes is the one referred to in the prophecy, which it may be desirable to notice before I pass on; and that is, that the prophet describes it as an edict “to restore and to build Jerusalem,” or rather, “to bring back [the people] and to build Jerusalem,” and that in consequence of this edict “the street” should be “built again, and the wall, even in troublous times,” while the only edict that referred to the building of the city and the wall was that issued in the 20th of Artaxerxes.

\* Lightfoot thinks that our Lord was born about the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, in the month Tisri, and was baptized about the same time of the year. (Hebr. and Talm. Exercit. upon St. Matthew, ch. iii. v. 16. Works, ii. 128.)

But this objection will certainly not stand the test of investigation. For as it respects the rebuilding of the city, it was clearly involved in all the decrees; for all of them permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem, and consequently to rebuild it, unless they were to live in tents. And in fact it was expressly prophesied of Cyrus, "He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives," &c. (Is. xlv. 13.)\*

And as to the building of the wall, it is clear that this also was done by Ezra, by permission of Artaxerxes, before the edict granted to Nehemiah in the 20th year of that king's reign, as appears from the following passage:—"For we were bondmen," says Ezra, "yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us *in the sight of the kings of Persia*, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and *to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.*" (Ezra ix. 9.) The same also appears from the first chapter of Nehemiah, where the very reason for Nehemiah's application to the king for the edict afterwards issued by him in the 20th year of his reign is thus given; that when he asked some of his brethren after the welfare of those who had returned to Jerusalem, the reply was, that they were "in great affliction and reproach; *the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.*" (Neh. i. 3.) And it is evident from Nehemiah's own account (ch. ii. and iii.) that all he did was to *repair* and *rebuild* the wall.

Moreover, if the translation "bring back the people" is adopted, the words apply forcibly to the decree issued in the 7th of Artaxerxes, but not to that issued in the 20th of his reign. On the latter occasion, there was no return of the Jews from Babylon; but in the 7th of Artaxerxes, there was a general gathering of the Jews that were in the realm of Artaxerxes to go back with Ezra to Jerusalem (Ezra viii.),

\* Josephus (Antiq. xi. i. 3.) expressly states that the Decree included this.



and the king's edict was, that all of them that desired to do so should accompany him, and gave power to Ezra to appoint magistrates and judges in Judæa, who should have authority to punish the disobedient by death, or banishment, or confiscation of goods, or imprisonment—in short, to reconstitute the Jewish State. (Ezra vii. 13, 25, 26.) And this gives to the decree of the 7th of Artaxerxes a peculiar fitness to be that which is alluded to in the prophecy. In Ezra's return, as Sir Isaac Newton observes, when advocating the view that the edict of the 7th of Artaxerxes was that alluded to in the prophecy, "they first became a polity or city by a government of their own." (Obs. on Dan. p. 1. ch. 10. p. 131.)

Another point which is worthy of notice in the prophecy, is, that the words of it seem to imply, that the first seven weeks, or septenaries, of years would be marked by some characteristics that would distinguish them from those that followed them. It is worth while inquiring, therefore, whether the forty-nine years that followed the seventh of Artaxerxes seemed to be a period of this kind, and I think we shall find that there is every reason to suppose that it was so, and that we could not say the same of the forty-nine years that came after the twentieth of Artaxerxes. Our hypothesis is, that the decree referred to in the prophecy was that issued by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign, and must have been issued towards the close of B.C. 458, or January B.C. 457. And forty-nine years from this period will bring us to the close of B.C. 409, or January B.C. 408; that is, to the close of the fifteenth or just the commencement of the sixteenth year of Darius Nothus.\*

Now, first, it seems clear from the accounts given us in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, that it was many years after the seventh of Artaxerxes before the Jewish State got into a settled condition, and the city and wall were fully built and permanently established, as the Jews had to pass, as the

\* See Clinton's *Fasti Hellen.* ii. 312, 315.

prophecy foretold, through "troublous times," on account of the persecution they suffered from their enemies. And the books of Ezra and Nehemiah show how these reformers gradually built up their State, and established their religious worship and customs, in accordance with the law of Moses.

And the last act of reformation mentioned in the book of Nehemiah is that by which he sent away those who would not obey the law of God with respect to their wives, which he himself tells us (Nehem. xiii. 28) was done when Joiada was high priest at Jerusalem.\* And, according to the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*, which Dean Prideaux thinks "gives us the truest account of the succession of the high-priests of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon to the reign of the Seleucian kings,"† Joiada succeeded to the high-priesthood on the death of his father, Eliashib, in the eleventh year of Darius Nothus, about four years before the expiration of the forty-nine years of the prophecy. The closing act, therefore, of Nehemiah's work of reformation, would be just about the time of the fulfilment of those forty-nine years, *i.e.* the end of B.C. 409, or the beginning of B.C. 408.

And what should also be observed is, that this same period seems also to synchronize with the termination of the period of the prophets, and the completion of the canon of the Old Testament.

For it seems clear, and is universally supposed, from the internal testimony of the book of Malachi, that his prophecy was delivered at the same period that Nehemiah's work of reformation, including the last act just adverted to, was going on. For it uses language which shows that the

\* In the English version, "Joiada the son of Eliashib the high priest," the words are ambiguous; but the original, as Dean Prideaux, in the passage quoted below, has pointed out, shows that the word "high priest" refers to Joiada not Eliashib. There ought to be a comma after Eliashib.

† O. and N. T. Hist. conn., Pt. 1. bk. 6. sub a. 409; vol. 2. p. 590, 10th ed. 1729.



Temple had been built for some time, and rebukes the Jews (ii. 11 et seq.) for their heathen wives, the removal of whom was the last act of Nehemiah's reformation,\* and complains also (iii. 8—12) of their withholding the tythes, which Nehemiah also notices.

This is the opinion of Dean Prideaux, who thinks that Malachi prophesied from about the year B.C. 428,† and that “the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament ended” “with the first period of Daniel's seventy weeks,” that is, the first seven weeks, which he considers to have terminated in B.C. 409.§

Kennicott supposes Malachi to have *flourished* about B.C. 420.||

Abp. Usher places him about B.C. 415.¶

Bp. Lloyd defers the time of Malachi's prophecies to B.C. 397. But this is for the purpose of suiting the period to his notion of the decree referred to in the prophecy being that issued in the 20th year of Artaxerxes.

II. We have now to consider how far the events of the next seven years after our Lord's baptism corresponded with the predictions of this prophecy. During this week Messiah was to be cut off, and in it he was to confirm the covenant with many; and in the midst of it, that is, in the fourth of the seven years, he was to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.

Now, that the Messiah was cut off during the course of these seven years, will be readily granted by all. We have to inquire, then, what testimony there is that his crucifixion took place in the course of the fourth year.

The precise period of our Lord's public ministry is nowhere stated. But we should be able to determine it if we knew the number of Passovers that took place during its course. For, as we find that our Lord attended a Passover not

\* See Nehem. xiii. 23—30.

† See Nehem. xiii. 5.

‡ O. and N. T. Hist. conn. Pt. 1. bk. 6. sub a. 428. ii. 570, 571.

§ Ib. p. 609. || Dissert. Gen. § 14. p. 6. ¶ Annals, sub a.

long after his baptism (John ii. 11—13), and as it is clear that his crucifixion took place at the period of the Passover, we have only to ascertain how many other Passovers happened during the period of his ministry, to determine almost its exact length. Now *one* is distinctly mentioned, John vi. 4: “The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.” And this appears to have been the Passover next preceding that at which he suffered, which is mentioned in John xi. 55; xiii. 1. If there were no other, this would make the duration of his ministry two years and a number of months depending upon the precise period of the Baptism. But this seems too short a time on account of the number of events that would have to be crowded into the period between that Passover and the first Passover after the Baptism. Mr. Clinton, after giving a tabular view of the transactions of our Lord’s ministry during this period, justly observes, that if the last Passover but one was the second Passover, a space of less than a year is given from the first Passover after the Baptism to the feeding the 5000. “But the things transacted and the regions visited seem to require a longer time. After the first Passover Jesus came into Judæa and dwelt there, and the Baptist continued his ministry. (John iii. 22, 23.) Then followed the imprisonment of John, after which event Jesus came into Galilee (Mark i. 14), then into Samaria (John iv. 3, 4), thence again to Galilee (John iv. 43). Then he came to Nazareth. (Luke iv. 16.) Leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum. (Matt. iv. 13.) After this he made the circuit of all Galilee. (Matt. iv. 23.) Then he is present at Jerusalem at *a certain feast*, of which however the name is not given. (John iv. 54. v. 1.) From Jerusalem he journeys into Galilee. (Luke vi. 1—4.) In Galilee he delivers the sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.—viii. 1), after which he is at Capernaum (Matt. viii. 5; Luke vii. 1). He teaches in Galilee (Matt. ix. 35), and at Capernaum (Mark iii. 7. 9). Then he passed over to the country of the Gadarenes. (Luke viii. 26.) After this he is at Nazareth. (Matt. ix. 1.) Being in Galilee,



he sends forth the twelve Apostles (Matt. x. 1 ; xi. 1), who return from their mission (Luke ix. 10). After their return he passed to the desert of Bethsaida, and there wrought the miracle of feeding the 5000 (Luke ix. 10—17),”\* which miracle preceded the last Passover but one.†

Now all these transactions could not take place in a space of time that was less than a year ; and if not, there must have been another Passover intervening between that after the Baptism, and the last but one ; and the transactions above mentioned would well occupy the time we should then have to assign to them, that is, somewhat less than two years.‡

Among these transactions, it will be observed, is the going up to Jerusalem to a certain feast. (John v. 1.) The Evangelist does not name the feast, but very probably this was the feast of the Passover. This however is doubtful, and therefore I rest nothing upon the supposition. The period of the ministry must be determined upon grounds independent of this.

We have every reason, therefore, to conclude that our Lord’s ministry lasted for three years, and a period of not less than two months and not more than six ;§ and, consequently, that his crucifixion took place at the Passover in A.D. 30.

His baptism, therefore, having taken place at the end of the 483 years, his crucifixion took place in the fourth or middle year of the subsequent seven years, and near, or possibly at, the very middle of that year.

\* Clinton’s *Fasti Rom.* ii. 233, 4.

† *Id.* ib. 231.

‡ See on this point, in addition to Clinton, Hales i. 96—100.

§ This is the opinion of Lightfoot, who reckons three years and a-half from our Lord’s baptism to his crucifixion ; which reckoning, he says, “is confirmed from the computation in the Evangelists, but especially in John, who clearly mentioneth four Passovers (ch. ii. 13 ; v. 1 ; vi. 4 ; xiii. 1) after his forty days’ fast, and not a little time spent in Galilee.” And he considers this time to be the first half of the last week of Daniel’s prophecy. (*Hebr. and Talmud. Exercit. upon St. Matthew*, ch. 3. v. 16. *Works*, ii. 128.)

Of the early Christian authors we may mention Eusebius of Cæsarea,\* Andreas of Cæsarea, and the author of the Paschal Chronicle, as agreeing exactly with this computation; the two former assigning three years and a-half, the last, three years and 76 days, to the public ministry. Most of the others assign to it a period of about three years; and some few, with evident inaccuracy, reckon its duration from a year and a few months to two years.†

But the testimony of Scripture only is to be relied upon in the matter.

In the midst of the 70th week, therefore, the Messiah was cut off, and the sacrifices and oblations of the Old Law, virtually and in the sight of God, ceased.

A curious confirmation of the correctness of this date seems to be afforded us by the testimony of an old Jewish tradition, as to the change observed from that time in what took place on the great day of Expiation, which occurred annually on the tenth day of the month Tisri, commencing in the latter part of September.

To understand the meaning of the tradition, we must observe, that on this day the high priest was to receive from the congregation two goats, and cast lots upon them to determine which should be sacrificed, and which sent away alive into the wilderness, after the sins of the people had been confessed over him, and laid as it were upon him. (Levit. xvi. 8 et seq.) The manner in which the lots were cast (according to the Mischna) was this. An urn was brought to the high priest, into which he threw two lots, on one of which was written, "For the Lord," on the other, "For the scape-goat." After he had shaken them, he put both his hands into the urn and brought up the lots, one in

\* Eusebius of Cæsarea maintains that the last septenary of Daniel's seventy septenaries of years refers to those seven years which were bisected by the crucifixion. See his *Dem. Evang.* ed. Col. 1688. p. 400.

† See Clinton, *Fasti Rom.* ii. 228, 9, and Hales i. 94—100.



each hand ; and as the goats stood one on each side of him, their fate was determined by the lot that came up in the hand next to them. If the right hand brought up the lot for the Lord, they regarded it as a proof of favour. But if the left, as an indication that God did not accept the offering.\*

Then the high priest bound a small piece, or tongue, as it was called, of scarlet wool on the head of the scape-goat, and another on the neck of the goat that was to be sacrificed.† The scape-goat was then led by some one appointed for the purpose, who might be a foreigner, to the top of a rock three miles from Jerusalem, and hurled from it backwards ; and the supposed token of God's acceptance was, that the scarlet wool should, on the descent of the goat, become white ; and the direction given to the person in charge of the goat, as stated in the Mischna, was, that he should divide the scarlet wool on the goat's forehead, fixing half of it on the rock, and leaving the other half on his forehead ; the reason of which, as stated by the rabbins, was, lest on the one hand the scarlet wool might become white before the goat was precipitated from the rock, and the person in charge, thinking "that the sins of the people were already pardoned," might omit to throw the goat over ; or on the other hand, the goat might so fall that the scarlet wool could not be seen, and so a fear arise "that their sins were not pardoned."‡

\* Mischna, tit. *Joma*, cap. 3. § 9, and cap. 4. § 1. ed. Surenhus. tom. ii. p. 223 and 226 ; Maimon. de sol. die Expiationum, cap. 3. § 1—3. p. 665—8. in Crenii Fascic. Sept. ; and Jennings' Jewish Antiq. bk. 3. c. 8, and Lightfoot's Temple Service, c. 15. Works, ii. 962.

† Mischna, tit. *Joma*, cap. 4. § 2. ed. Surenh. tom. ii. p. 226.

‡ Mischna, tit. *Joma*, cap. 7. § 6. cum Annot. Ob. de Bartenora et Mos. Maimon. ed. Surenh. tom. ii. pp. 241, 2. It is stated in the Gemara of the Babylonian Talmud (according to a note of Sheringham, *eod. loc.*), that the rabbins say, that the scarlet wool was originally fixed on the outer door of the Temple ; and if it became white (which it was expected to do when the scapegoat

It will also be recollected, that the law of Moses forbade any one to be even in the tabernacle of the congregation when the high priest went into the holy place to offer the sacrifice. (See Levit. xvi. 17.)

Bearing these things in mind, let us observe the following statement in the Gemara of the Babylonian Talmud :—" Our rabbins relate, that for forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the lot did not come up in the right hand, nor did the tongue of scarlet wool become white, nor was the evening candle lit, and the gates of the Temple opened of their own accord."\*

The destruction of the Temple took place A.D. 70, so that the signs here noted occurred on and after the day of Expiation in A.D. 30, that is (according to the date of the crucifixion for which I am contending) on and after the first day of Expiation which happened after our Lord was crucified. This, surely, is a remarkable confirmation of the correctness of that date, out of the mouths of our Lord's bitterest enemies. When the true anti-typical victim had been offered, the signs that had intimated the acceptance of the typical victims were withdrawn, showing that in the sight of God such sacrifices were a nullity; and even the gates of the Temple were miraculously thrown open, apparently to show that all men might approach freely to the Divine mercy-seat.

I offer no remarks upon the signs here mentioned as in-

fell) the people rejoiced; but if not, they mourned and were troubled; afterwards it used to be fixed on the inner door, and was watched in the same way, but ultimately the custom was as above described. Allusion is made to its being fixed on the gate of the Temple in the context of the Mishna, as quoted above, namely, in § 8. p. 244.

\* Talmud Babylon. tit. *Joma*, c. 4, as quoted by Selden De Synedr. lib. ii. c. 15. ed. Amstel. 1679. 4to. p. 383. And see Lightfoot's Temple Service, c. 15. Works, ed. 1684. vol. 1. p. 963, and Hebr. and Talm. Exerc. on the Acts, ch. 4. v. 6. *ibid.* vol. 2. p. 652.



dicating the Divine acceptance; there is no Scriptural authority for them, and they rest only on Jewish tradition. But the account certainly shows, that there were reasons for supposing, that, on and after the great day of atonement of A.D. 30, God had no longer any respect for the expiatory sacrifices of the Jews.

That remarkable signs preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, is a matter of history; and one fact here recorded, the spontaneous opening of the gates of the Temple, is among those mentioned by Tacitus,\* as well as Josephus.† The period, indeed, alluded to by Josephus (from whom Tacitus seems to have taken his account) appears to have been nearer the destruction of the city than that here referred to. But the words of the tradition I have quoted seem to imply, that the prodigy occurred during the whole of the forty years before the destruction of the Temple.

If we knew the precise method of calculation used by the Jews at the time of the Christian era for adjusting the time of the Passover, we should have another and very decisive test by which to prove the year of the crucifixion, because it must have been a year in which the 14th of the month Nisan happened on the sixth day of the week, or Friday, the day of the crucifixion being a day preceding the seventh-day Sabbath.‡ But this unfortunately is not the case.§

\* *Expassæ repente delubri fores.* Taciti Histor. lib. v. § 13.

† *Josephi De bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 5.*

‡ Mark xv. 42; Luke xxiii. 54, 56; John xix. 31. The last text particularly seems to prove, that, even allowing that the 15th of Nisan might be called a Sabbath on account of its being a day for a holy convocation, and on which no servile work was to be done, though it were not the seventh day of the week, (as the word is clearly used several times in Lev. xxiii.,) yet on this occasion it was a Sabbath doubly binding, as being a solemn feast in addition to the ordinary seventh-day Sabbath.

§ See Clinton's *Fasti Rom.* ii. p. 241. Bowyer's *Conject. on the New Test.* on John vi. 6. 4th ed. 1812. pp. 275—277. Jackson's *Chronol.* ii. 19, 20. Benson's *Chronol. of our Saviour's life.*

Nevertheless it is worth observing, that if the cycle they used at that time was the Calippic of 76 years,\* (as Dodwell, judging from the statements of Josephus, supposes,†) and the computations of Dodwell are correct, we have an additional argument for fixing A.D. 30 as the year of the crucifixion. For Dodwell says,—

“ We may hence, if I am not mistaken, find out what was the year in which our Lord was crucified. For it is commonly believed to be certain that it was a year in which the 14th day of the lunar civil month fell upon the sixth day of the week. But there was no such year between the fifteenth of Tiberius and the end of the reign of the same prince, except two ; for in the 30th year of the vulgar Christian era the fourteenth of Nisan occurred in the 55th year of the Cycle, and was the seventh of the Julian April and the sixth day of the week, the Dominical letter being A. And in the 34th year of the same epoch, which was the 59th of the Cycle, again, the fourteenth of Nisan was the 26th of the Julian March, and the sixth day of the week, the Dominical letter being C. Therefore in one of these two years our Lord must have been crucified, if the Jews who were our Lord’s contemporaries observed the fourteenth of the Paschal moons according to the rule of this Cycle.”‡

Of these two dates the evidence already adduced will of

pp. 304, 326, 334. Gieseler’s Eccl. Hist. (Davidson’s trans.) i. 55.

\* This Cycle was introduced B.C. 330, as an improvement upon the Metonic of 19 years ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of 76), introduced B.C. 430.

† Dodwell *De veter. Cyclis*. Oxon. 1701. 4to. Diss. ix. §§ 21 et seq. pp. 397—400. It is said by Clinton, (judging from passages in Epiphanius, hæres. 51. § 26. Op. i. 449. and hæres. 70. § 11. ib. p. 823,) that they used a cycle of 84 years, which was by no means exact, and that their use of the Metonic cycle is comparatively modern (*Fasti Roman.* ii. 241) ; and Bingham (*Antiq.* bk. 20. ch. 5. Works vii. 102, 3) makes the same assertion, and says that the early Christians used the same cycle of 84 years to find Easter for nearly two centuries. But this I think very doubtful.

‡ Dodwell, loc. cit. diss. ix. § 27. p. 406.



course induce us to select the former.\* And if we had satisfactory evidence that the Jews at that time did use the Calippic Cycle, as Dodwell endeavours to prove they did from the statements in Josephus, the calculation would clearly prove that the crucifixion took place A.D. 30.

I do not, however, dwell further on this point, because it is involved in too many uncertainties and ambiguities to enable us to come to any definite conclusion on the subject. All depends upon our knowing the Jewish mode of reckoning at the time; and of this we are not certain. So that, however easily and certainly we may be able to determine the true period at which the Passover *ought* to have been celebrated in the time of our Lord, we are quite unable to determine from this what was the *actual* time of its celebration, which is the point in question.

III. The prophecy adds, that during these seven years the Messiah was to confirm or establish the covenant with many. From the nature of the prophecy, this might be expected to refer more particularly to the Jews, and so we find it to be. During our Lord's ministry, many of the Jews—to whom, be it observed, our Lord's ministrations were almost wholly confined—were brought within the bond of the New Covenant, and became his disciples; and for some time after his crucifixion his disciples preached to the Jews only, multitudes of whom were converted to Christ, and

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\* Dodwell himself, reasoning from different data, thinks the latter date to be nearest the truth; but in another part of the same work (§§ 39, 40. pp. 420—424), in order to bring the date to A.D. 33, as being the year in which he thinks the eclipse mentioned by Phlegon took place, he suggests the probability of the adoption of an emendation in the mode of reckoning the Cycle which would alter the day of the week on which the 14th of Nisan fell, and also intimates a doubt whether we can be *certain* that our Lord's crucifixion took place on the sixth day of the week. But it would be useless to enter upon a discussion of these points. In the last, Dodwell stands almost alone, and the testimony of Scripture seems clear. And the date of the eclipse mentioned by Phlegon is doubtful.

embraced the Gospel Covenant. And it was our Lord's command to his apostles, that they should preach the Gospel to the Jews first. (Acts xiii. 46.) We have therefore to inquire, how long this special period of mercy to the Jews seems to have lasted.

Here it is evident that we have a different sort of fact to deal with from those that mark the other stages in the fulfilment of this prophecy. In *them* the occurrence of a particular event of public notoriety at a certain period, was the test of the truth of the prediction. Here the actual termination of the period of God's special mercy to the Jews is an event known only to God. All, therefore, that the case admits of in the way of proof on this point is, evidence that, for some three or four years after our Lord's crucifixion, the Gospel continued to make progress among the Jews. And this evidence we possess in abundance.

The narrative given us in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles of the proceedings of the disciples of Christ after his ascension, clearly proves, that for some time after that event the Apostles themselves supposed, that their mission was only to their countrymen the Jews, and that they abstained from preaching to the Gentiles. And until the martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution that followed it, which drove away many of the disciples from Jerusalem, the preaching of the Gospel was confined to Jerusalem and its immediate neighbourhood. And here it succeeded in obtaining many converts. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were added to the Christian Church through the preaching of Peter. (Acts ii. 42.) And afterwards "the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." (ib.) On another occasion "many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." (Acts iv. 4.) And again, "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts v. 14), so that the high priest accused the apostles of having "filled Jerusalem with their doctrine." (ib. v. 28.) "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in



Jerusalem greatly ; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Acts vi. 7.) Thus our Lord graciously established the covenant with many of his ancient people.

But then came the second open and determined rejection of him by the Jewish rulers, after all the signs and wonders that had been wrought before their eyes through his name, in the martyrdom of Stephen, and the persecution of the Christians that immediately followed it. And it is observable, that *from that time* we read no more of any such large conversions among the Jews, as we have quoted above. The only subsequent notice of the kind that I have observed, being that in Acts ix. 31 : “ Then had the churches rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, *were multiplied.*” This seems to have happened after St. Paul’s first return to Jerusalem after his conversion on his journey to Damascus, which happened three years after that event. (Gal. i. 18.)

This, no doubt, seems to show, that mercy to the Jews was not *altogether stopped*, even at the end of the seven years from the beginning of our Saviour’s ministry. And, of course, individual cases of conversion have occurred, more or less, from that time to this.

But immediately after the martyrdom of Stephen, “ there was,” we are told, “ a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem,” and “ they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.” (Acts viii. 1, 4.)

And among them were “ men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians,\*

\* There is a difference of opinion here as to the true reading, as some copies have *Ἑλληνιστὰς*, not *Ἕλληνας*, and some contend that foreign Jews speaking the Greek language were intended. But *Ἕλληνας* is the reading of the most ancient MS., the Alexandrine, and may be supported on other grounds. The whole

preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them : and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." (Acts xi. 20, 21.)

From this passage, then, it seems probable (a difference in the reading preventing us from speaking with certainty), that immediately after the death of Stephen, the Gospel was preached, through these "men of Cyprus and Cyrene," who had probably been Jewish proselytes, to the Gentiles. The preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, therefore, probably took place first at Antioch, and here arose the name of Christians, by which the disciples of Christ were afterwards distinguished. (Acts xi. 26.) And the Gentile Church here is mentioned soon afterwards in Acts xv. 22,

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passage stands thus : — "Therefore those that were scattered abroad in consequence of the persecution that happened about Stephen, went as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but to the Jews only. *But* (δέ) some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who when they had come to Antioch spake to the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." There is an evident distinction drawn here between the parties mentioned in these two verses, and between those to whom they preached, which is entirely done away with, if we suppose that in the latter verse *Jews* were intended. For their being foreign Jews speaking the Greek language, did not render them less Jews ; and therefore, if Jews had been meant, they would have been included in the former verse, and the latter verse becomes quite superfluous and unmeaning. The reading, "Ελληνας, in this sense, (the same in which it is evidently used in Acts xxi. 28,) is supported by Usher, Annals, 867, 8 (Engl. transl.), and Witsius, De vita Pauli, sect. 3. n. 3. The sacred writer seems to have had in his eye,—when speaking, in the former verse, of those driven from Jerusalem,—more particularly those who had been permanently residing there, and then to have added a notice of those who, happening to be there for a time when the persecution broke out, were involved in it, and were very probably proselytes, who, after their conversion to Christianity, would naturally preach Christ to their countrymen ; just as, no doubt, the Ethiopian eunuch, who had been a proselyte, but was baptized by Philip about the same time (Acts viii. 26), preached Christianity to his countrymen on his return to Ethiopia.

The common notion, that the Gospel was never preached to the Gentiles till Peter received his commission to do so, is probably



23, et seq. And not very long after, took place the conversion of Saul, and his mission to the Gentiles. For his journey to Damascus seems to have taken place shortly after (see Acts ix. 1—10); and it was at our Lord's appearance to him on this journey that his mission to the Gentiles was at once given him, as we learn from his own testimony. For he tells us, that our Lord's own words to him on that occasion were,—“I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, &c., delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, *unto whom now I send thee*, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light,” &c. (Acts xxvi. 16—18.)

And some time after this,\* St. Peter received his commission to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Now, it is no doubt impossible, from the scanty account furnished us by the sacred writers, to fix precisely the time of these events, because they have not given us those notes of time in their narratives which would enable us to speak with certainty. But we can obtain a sufficiently near approximation to it.

quite erroneous. For St. Paul received his commission to do so before St. Peter. (Acts xxvi. 16—18.) And we are, in fact, told that he “disputed against the Grecians,” (*Ἑλληνας*, according to the Alex. MS. and other authorities,) (Acts ix. 29), and there is no reason for explaining this away to mean Jews who spoke the Greek language, because he had already received his commission to preach to the Gentiles. But they might very probably be proselytes, which would explain their anger against Paul for supporting the Christian faith. And the supposed offence of Peter, when he went to Cornelius, seems to have been, not that he preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, but that he “went in to men uncircumcised, and did *eat with them*.” There was, in fact, no reason, and probably no prejudice, to prevent Jewish proselytes, when converted to Christianity, from preaching the Gospel to their fellow-countrymen.

\* But this, apparently, was not till more than three years after. For it was three years after St. Paul's conversion before he returned to Jerusalem (Gal. i. 18), and in Acts ix. 26 et seq., this visit to Jerusalem is spoken of as occurring previous to Peter's commission to preach to the Gentiles, as related in Acts x.

First, then, it is at least clear from the passages already quoted, that up to the time of the martyrdom of Stephen, the Gospel met with considerable success among the Jews at Jerusalem, both among those resident there and those who visited it during that period. Our first inquiry then is, what was the date of Stephen's martyrdom? And here, as in all such cases where Scripture is not explicit on the subject, the early Christian writers vary widely from each other. The martyrdom of Stephen is placed by them at different periods, varying from less than a year after our Lord's crucifixion, to seven years after it. Both these extremes are evidently erroneous. The former has, perhaps, arisen from the martyrdom of Stephen having taken place at a period of the year about eight or nine months after that in which the crucifixion took place. But it is clear that the events recorded in the Acts as having preceded the martyrdom of Stephen, could not have taken place within this space of time. The proceedings of the Apostles, as narrated in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th chapters, must have taken up some little time. Subsequent to these, we read of the disciples selling their lands and bringing the money to the Apostles, not only those dwelling at Jerusalem, but those who belonged to other countries; which certainly would require some time. Then we hear of a series of miracles being performed, and of the addition from time to time of great multitudes of believers in the Christian faith, until the high priest and his followers became alarmed for the result. (ch. 5.) Then we find that a time came when the disciples were so far organized into a distinct body, that there was a system of daily ministration established for the widows among them (ch. vi. 1, 2); and seven men, one of whom is Stephen, are appointed to attend to this matter. After this appointment, we are told of a great increase taking place in the number of the disciples (vi. 7), which we must suppose to have required a little time. Then we read of Stephen doing great wonders and miracles among the people (vi. 8), and carrying on his disputations against opponents with such success as



to stir up a bitter spirit against himself, and to induce them to accuse him before the Council; all which must have occupied some time.

Now, if we endeavour to calculate the probable time occupied by all these events, we are making, I think, a moderate estimate of its length when we say that it must have been at least three years and a half, and probably rather more.

And that the martyrdom of Stephen took place three years after the crucifixion, is stated by Syncellus in his Chronicle,\* and others of the ancients.†

A probable confirmation of this date for the martyrdom of Stephen may be gained from the period about which St. Paul's conversion on his journey to Damascus must have taken place. From his own statements in his Epistles, compared with the notices respecting him in the Acts, it seems probable that his conversion took place about A.D. 36, and certainly not before A.D. 35. And if we inspect the account given in the Acts of what took place between the martyrdom of Stephen and the conversion of St. Paul, we can hardly suppose it to have been more than two years.

Bishop Pearson‡ thinks that Stephen was martyred A.D. 34, and Paul converted on his journey to Damascus at the close of A.D. 35. And this I believe to be the true date.

And as it respects the date of St. Paul's journey to Damascus, it is not improbable that it might take place upon the removal of Pontius Pilate as governor of Judæa, which event happened about the autumn of A.D. 35,§ the chief priests being then better able to give authority to Paul to go to Damascus on his errand of persecution.

I incline, therefore, to the supposition that the seven years of mercy for establishing the covenant with many of the

\* The statement of Syncellus is, that our Lord was crucified A.D. 34, and that Stephen was stoned A.D. 37. See his *Chronographia*, Paris. 1652. fol. pp. 327, 329.

† See Valesii Annot. in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. c. 1.

‡ Annal. Paul. in Oper. Posth. p. 1.

§ See Clinton's *Fasti Rom.* ii. 235, 236.

Jews terminated about the time of Stephen's martyrdom, which in all probability was in Dec. A.D. 33, or January A.D. 34.\*

But this it is not at all necessary to determine. The establishment of the covenant with many, for at least the time required by the prophecy, is a fact to which there is abundant testimony. And this is the only proof which the nature of the case admits as to the fulfilment of this particular point in the prophecy.

For if I have been in error in assigning too long a period between our Lord's crucifixion and the martyrdom of Stephen, we still have evidence, as I have already pointed out, that the work of conversion among the Jews was not altogether stopped even at a period three years subsequent to that event.

\* Dr. Hales (Chronol. vol. 1. pp. 96—101. 2nd ed.) takes the same view of the events of the "one week" of the seventy which is separated from the rest, but considers the baptism to have taken place in the autumn of A.D. 27, the crucifixion in the spring of A.D. 31, and the martyrdom of Stephen in the autumn of A.D. 34.

But his interpretation of the rest of the prophecy (vol 2. pp. 514 et seq.) seems to me to be entirely inadmissible. In order to make the prophecy terminate with the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, he is obliged to fix the beginning of the 490 years at B.C. 420, the fourth year of Darius Nothus, which year has nothing to mark it as the commencement of this period. And then, as the seven and sixty-two weeks of years would carry him beyond the period when the Messiah was cut off, he is obliged to take the sixty-two weeks (after which Messiah was to be cut off) first, and as these only bring him to A.D. 14, he takes two of the seven weeks next to bring him to A.D. 28, and then interposes the one week during which our Lord's crucifixion was to take place and supposes the remaining five of the seven weeks to succeed. To state such a notion seems to me sufficient to refute it. When it is said, that after the 62 weeks Messiah should be cut off, it could not mean that two weeks and a half more were to elapse before that event, and such a division of the seven weeks as is here proposed seems quite inadmissible. The notion that led him to strain the passage to this hypothesis evidently was, that the prophecy mentioned the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, and this was not fulfilled till just before the destruction of Jerusalem. But the words of the prophecy do not at all prove that this event was to happen within the period of the 490 years.



Taking therefore the shortest calculation for that period, namely, about eight months, we have sufficient evidence left as to the work of conversion having gone on to the end of the seven years.

For myself, however, I prefer the former view of the fulfilment of the prophecy.

The dates of these events, according to the era of the foundation of Rome, or *anno urbis conditæ*, will be as follows :—

That era commenced in the *spring* or *summer* of B.C. 753. (See Hales i. 140, and Clinton Fasti Hellen. iii. Introd. p. xviii. and p. 463.)

Therefore the first year u.c. corresponded to B.C. 753 to 752.

And January u.c. 1. = Jan. B.C. 752.

And Jan. B.C. 457 (752—295) corresponded to Jan. u.c. 296 (1+295).

And Jan. B.C. 1 (457—456) = Jan. u.c. 752 (296 + 456.)

And Jan. A.D. 1 = Jan. u.c. 753.

And Jan. A.D. 27 = Jan. u.c. 779.

And March or April A.D. 30 = March or April u.c. 782.\*

And Jan. A.D. 34 = Jan. u.c. 786.

According to this view, then, of the meaning of the prophecy, the period of time to which it refers is that which extended from the restoration of the Jewish polity under Ezra, to the termination of the period of Divine mercy to the Jews on the murder of the first Christian martyr Stephen, and the general persecution of the Christians that followed it. From that time they were no longer under God's protection, and only waited the course of events to experience the full infliction of the Divine wrath. And the seventy weeks are divided into three periods of seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week, all marked by special characteristics. The first seven include the complete re-settlement of

\* The year u.c. 783 not commencing till a little after this period of the year.

the Jewish polity, and terminate with the conclusion of the era of the prophets. The next sixty-two extend from this point of time to the public appearance of the promised Messiah. The last week comprises the period during which the Jewish nation were the special objects of our Lord's ministrations through himself and his Apostles, and experienced the Divine mercy in being called to partake of the privileges of the New Covenant, including within it the offering of that predicted atoning sacrifice of which the sacrifices under the Mosaic law were all types and figures, and which therefore necessarily brought that Dispensation to an end.

There seems, therefore, a peculiar propriety in the termination of the period of this prophecy at such a time, rather than at the destruction of Jerusalem, because then the Jewish Dispensation was in fact closed, and subsequent events were merely the *results* arising out of this Divine dereliction of the Jewish nation.

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NOTE B. TO SERMON X. (*Page* 187.)

Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum ac Titum prædixerant. TACIT. Hist. v. 13.

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NOTE C. TO SERMON X. (*Page* 188.)

Τὸ δὲ ἐπάραν αὐτοὺς [*i. e.* Ἰουδαίους] μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον, ἣν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐρημένος γράμμασιν, “ὥς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκείνον, ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τὺς αὐτῶν



ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης.” Τοῦτο οἱ μὲν ὡς οἰκεῖον ἐξέλαβον, καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν σοφῶν ἐπλανήθησαν περὶ τὴν κρίσιν· ἐδήλου δ’ ἄρα περὶ τὴν Οὐεσπασιανοῦ τὸ λόγιον ἡγεμονίαν, ἀποδειχθέντος ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκράτορος. JOSEPHUS De Bell. Jud. vi. 5. 4. Op. ed. Oxon. 1720. tom. 2. p. 1283. See also EUSEB. Hist. Eccles. iii. 8.

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## NOTES TO SERMON XI.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON XI. (Page 205.)

Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis,  
 Augustus Cæsar, Divûm genus, aurea condet  
 Sæcula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva  
 Saturno quondam : super et Garamantas et Indos  
 Proferet imperium : jacet extra sidera tellus,  
 Extra anni solisque vias, ubi cœlifer Atlas  
 Axem humero torquet stellis ardentibus aptum.  
 Hujus in adventu jam nunc et Caspia regna  
 Responsis horrent Divûm ; et Mœotica tellus  
 Et septemgemini turbant trepida ostia Nili.

(Virgil. Æneid. vi. 791—800.)

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## NOTES TO SERMON XII.

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### NOTE A. TO SERMON XII. (*Page 214.*)

THE prophecy here referred to is not to be found in the writings attributed to Jeremiah, but in those that come to us under the name of Zechariah. (Ch. xi. vv. 12, 13.) Various explanations are offered to meet the difficulty hence arising. One is, that the Evangelist, quoting, as he evidently does, from memory, mentions by mistake the name of Jeremiah instead of that of Zechariah. Such a mistake is no doubt possible, without invalidating the authority of his narrative. But I think there is a more satisfactory solution.

Another is, that the latter portion of the prophecies attributed to Zechariah (ch. ix.—xiv.) were in reality written by Jeremiah. The principal supporters of this opinion are Mede, Hammond, and Bp. Kidder. Their arguments have been well met by Blayney; and I think, with him, that it is impossible to suppose, “that those of the Jewish Church who settled the Canon of Scripture, of whom Zechariah himself is supposed to have been one, should have been so grossly ignorant of the right author of these chapters (Zech. ix.—xiv.) as to place them under a wrong name,” and “it is not, I think, pretended that these chapters have been found in any copy of the Old Testament otherwise placed than as they now stand.” (Blayney in loc.) The most ancient Jewish Rabbins quote them as written by Zechariah, and they are so translated in the old Septuagint version.

Some have entertained the notion that “Zechariah” has been turned into “Jeremiah” by a mistake, arising from the contractions used in the mode of writing in some MSS. But this is at once negatived by the fact, that the difficulty



existed and was discussed by the early Fathers before such contractions were used.

The solution of the difficulty which commends itself to my own mind as the most satisfactory, especially as it is borne out by the authority of some MSS. and ancient versions, is that which supposes that the Evangelist wrote only *διὰ τοῦ προφήτου*, and that the name *Ἰερεμίου* was added by some transcriber, perhaps at first in the margin, and afterwards by others in the text, as we know was sometimes done. Augustine (*De Cons. Evang.* iii. 7) testifies that in his time some of the MSS. had not the name. Exactly the same words occur in *Matt.* ii. 17, where the citation is from Jeremiah, and this might lead a transcriber to add the name here. (See Wetstein in *Matt.* xxvii. 9; Wolf. *Curæ Philol.* *ibid.*; and Newcome and Blayney, on *Zech.* ix. 1, and xi. 13.)

On the objection that the words in St. Matthew are not exactly those used by Zechariah, it is sufficient to remark, that it is not to be expected they should be, as such a method of quotation was not usual with the sacred writers, or generally adopted at that time. All that is required is, that the import of the words should be the same, and that is clearly the case.

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#### ERRATUM.

P. 91, l. 19. For "*Jerusalem*" read "*Antioch.*"

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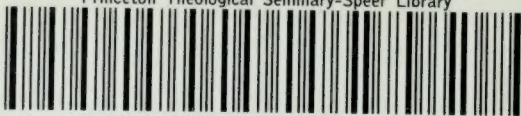
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